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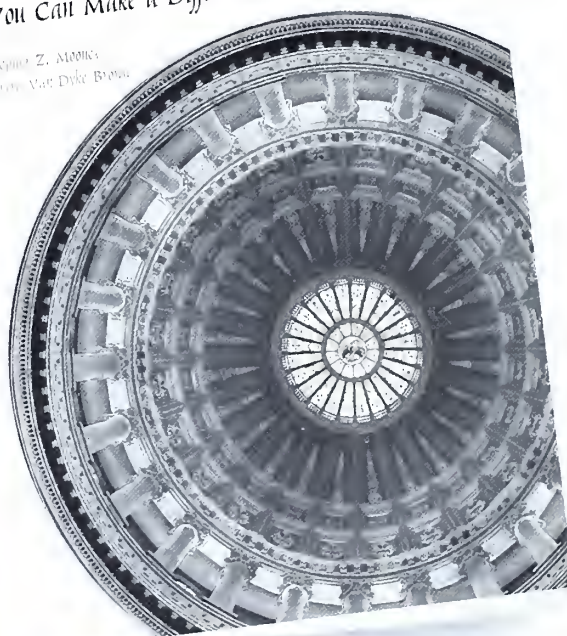
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Peggy Boyer Long



History offers lessons for Illinois' next governor

by Peggy Boyer Long

Four years ago, in the pages of this magazine, essayist Donald Sevenser urged the next Illinois governor to be a thinker, to be, as he put it, "bold, inventive, visionary." Nothing less will be required if we are to meet the

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Donald Sevenser, *Illinois Issues*,
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Halting corruption may be a compelling theme to voters these days. But we offer another. Instead of promising not to do what's wrong — how hard is that? — what about promising to do what's right? Easy

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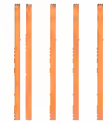
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Peggy Boyer Long



History offers lessons for Illinois' next governor

by Peggy Boyer Long

Four years ago, in the pages of this magazine, essayist Donald Sevenser urged the next Illinois governor to be a thinker, to be, as he put it, “bold, inventive, visionary.” Nothing less will be required if we are to meet the challenges of this new century, address the needs of this complex, increasingly diverse state (see September 1998, page 12).

Next month, we'll take the measure of the man who won that election.

But as Illinois heads into the final weeks of this campaign season, we again post Sevenser's advice, and offer a bit of our own. To be bold, inventive and visionary in the lowest-common-denominator context of Illinois politics, the next governor will need to show considerable character and courage.

He will need, as Sevenser wrote then, to be willing and able to think “outside the box.” And capable enough to convince us to do so, too.

What are the chances? Clearly, two mainstream partisans want this job badly. Aaron Chambers introduces them on page 15. Yet, sadly, these are a couple of cautious campaigners. Neither the Republican nor the Democrat has, as yet, felt compelled to color much beyond the lines of his respective party frame.

These are play-it-safe bids. They offer neither challenge nor inspiration. There is no hint of bold, not so much as a whiff of vision. And these candidates have not asked much, if anything, of the rest of us

“The times call for a governor who is a thinker — bold, inventive, visionary.”

Donald Sevenser, *Illinois Issues*,
September 1998

“The more I see and know of the politicians in this state, the less respect and confidence I have in them.”

Edward Coles, Illinois' second governor,
1822-1826

either. Their rhetoric, and the ideas it represents, was encoded long ago: “working people” and “business-friendly” are but two.

Yet events have a way sometimes of overtaking public officials, of transforming them from functionaries to leaders. We have no way of foreseeing such events, no way of predicting whether, or in what way, time and place might remake the winner of any given political match.

On this, unfortunately, hindsight is our only guide. As Robert Davis shows on page 30, history offers many lessons on the Illinois governors whose scruples got waylaid — and the governors who got waylaid by their scruples. He ventures a few. We send them along in the spirit of this election year, when halting “corruption” appears to be a major goal of virtually every statewide candidate.

Halting corruption may be a compelling theme to voters these days. But we offer another. Instead of promising not to do what's wrong — how hard is that? — what about promising to do what's right? Easy to say, as well. But more difficult to do.

As it turns out, Illinois history also has much to teach about leaders who did just that, who pushed aside politics to follow conscience. There have been Illinois governors who were bold and brave, who were able to envision the long-term best interests of this state and its citizens. There have been Illinois governors who left legacies more lasting than the biographical footnotes about their fates.

We can think of at least two very different governors who faced up to two very different sets of moral choices. Whatever their distinctions, each of these governors had to learn to think in new ways, then disregard risk to personal popularity and political fortune.

The first was Edward Coles, our second governor, who succeeded in preventing Illinois from becoming a slave state. Coles, who was born on a Virginia plantation in 1786, became an abolitionist while attending college. His teachers argued that, while slavery was morally wrong, it must be left in place because it would be too difficult to root it out. “Was it right,” Coles questioned, “to do what we believed to be wrong because our forefathers did it?”

BOOKSHELF

Governor Edward Coles

*Edited with introduction and notes
by Clarence Walworth Alvord,
Illinois State Historical Library,
1920*

Marching to a Different Drummer: Unrecognized Heroes of American History

*With a chapter on Edward Coles,
by Robin Kadison Berson,
Greenwood Press, 1994*

Eagle Forgotten: The Life of John Peter Altgeld

*by Harry Barnard,
Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1938*

Mostly Good and Competent Men

*Chapters on all Illinois governors,
by Robert P. Howard,
Second Edition, The Institute
for Public Affairs, University
of Illinois at Springfield, 1999*

To arrive at an answer of his own, Coles had to think his way beyond the borders of his own history, culture and family. To press that answer toward logical conclusion, he had to leave home, sacrifice what would have been a comfortable career among such friends as Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, and cash in a sizable patrimony. All for the sake of an idea.

After selling his share of the family plantation, Coles purchased 6,000 acres near Edwardsville. Then, in one of the more dramatic scenes from Illinois history, he freed his slaves while traveling aboard a couple of flatboats on the Ohio River. He gave each family a quarter section of land.

Coles bequeathed something more to his adopted state.

After he was elected governor in 1822, Illinois' slavery advocates pushed for a referendum to call for a new, pro-slavery constitutional convention. Robert Howard writes in *Mostly Good and Competent Men* that, throughout a bitter 18-month campaign on that question, Coles "worked long hours, wrote extensively, and contributed more than the \$4,000 that was his four-year salary."

In the heavy 1824 balloting, Coles' supporters won 6,640 to 4,972.

Illinois' 20th governor, too, was seized by an idea. But he took action reluctantly. John Peter Altgeld was a far more complex public official. His record as governor, and as a Cook County judge before, makes for a fascinating study in personal and political contradictions. As a judge, he was fined for writing contemptuous letters to colleagues on the bench. A closet liberal, he ran for governor as an anti-tax, law-and-order candidate. After the 1892 election, he increased spending and boosted the state levy on property. And he pardoned the three surviving men who had been convicted for a bombing in Chicago's Haymarket Square.

"His courageous but belligerent 18,000-word justification of the decision," Howard writes, "made him the most hated man in Illinois."

But even this moral decision affords no straightforward story line. After the

1886 bombing at a meeting called to protest police brutality, Altgeld didn't join the 60,000 Chicagoans who signed clemency petitions for the accused anarchists. And early in his tenure as governor, he ignored requests to free those who hadn't been hanged.

But Altgeld studied the trial records and collected information on police brutality. He well knew the public's fears about bomb-throwing foreign-born radicals. So he sought advice from Democratic leaders, who argued he could say goodbye to ambitions for the U.S. Senate. And he sought political cover by trying to convince respected former U.S. Sen. Lyman Trumbull to ask for the pardon. Trumbull refused.

Alone with his decision, Altgeld determined the trial had been unfair, that prejudice had served the interests of corporations against working people. Without prior public notice, he granted outright pardons.

Harry Barnard's highly readable 1938 hagiography, *Eagle Forgotten*, gives us this wonderful scene: The morning the news broke, Altgeld was spotted wandering on horseback about the Capitol grounds wearing a strange wan smile, considering, perhaps, his shattered public career.

Historian David Brion Davis has written that significant moral change requires deviants, people who are willing to risk unpopularity.

Still, history is an uncertain editor. She continues to rewrite the stories of past governors, as she will write, then rewrite the stories of this governor and the next governor. It's wise, then, to do the right thing at the right moment and let history take care of herself.

Then again, if the next governor should go looking for the next right thing, he could do no better than equity in school spending. As columnist Charles Wheeler suggests on page 38, the challenge for Illinoisans is to make good on the principle that every child, no matter where he or she lives, has a basic right to a quality education. To accomplish that, we would have to be "bold, inventive, visionary." □

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Illinois Issues

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Volume XXVIII, No. 10



Clean sweep, page 12



Executive suite, page 15



Who's laughing now? page 30

FEATURES

12 Clean sweep?

by Dave McKinney

Illinois Democrats pin their fall hopes on a big broom.

15 Executive suite

by Aaron Chambers

The race is on to become Illinois' 40th governor.

21 The intellectual and the activist

by Adriana Colindres

Candidates for second-in-command bring experience. And different styles.

23 The prosecutor and the advocate

by Kevin McDermott

Differences over the job description separate the attorney general candidates.

25 The bill payer

by Daniel C. Vock

Comptroller candidates have been protecting cemeteries and planting trees.

27 The administrator

by Adriana Colindres

Illinois' next secretary of state will uphold or overturn history.

28 The banker

by Daniel C. Vock

Treasurer candidates get down and dirty for this down-the-ballot post.

30 Who's laughing now?

by Robert Davis

Illinois voters have always tolerated a little petty larceny, so long as pols don't break certain cardinal rules.

Credits: Diana Nelson took the photograph on this month's cover.

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DEPARTMENTS

3 EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Peggy Boyer Long

6 STATE OF THE STATE

Who's in charge?

by Aaron Chambers

8 BRIEFLY

32 PEOPLE

34 LETTERS

35 A VIEW FROM THE SUBURBS

No one would blame "Pate."

by Madeleine Doubek

36 PUBLISHER'S GALLERY

If not the Cardinals, what?

by Michael E. Morsch

38 POLITICS

A shot at school finance reform?

by Charles N. Wheeler III

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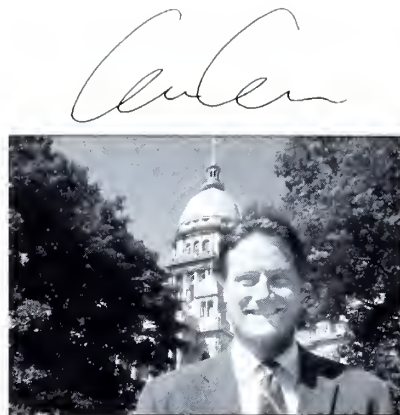
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If Chicagoans take control of the Statehouse, intra-city rivalry might simply move to Springfield

by Aaron Chambers

Politics begins and ends on the streets. It's where party functionaries and public officials organize the votes that put them into power, and where they send government services. It's where they must prove themselves, and where they'll be measured.

This is certainly true in Chicago, where local wards make up the building blocks of a citywide Democratic power base. That these wards also constitute an age-old map of contending neighborhood alliances is something most Chicagoans know instinctively.

It's something other Illinoisans — who grasp regionalism on a larger scale and see Chicago as a monolith — may be about to learn, as well. If Chicagoans take control of the Statehouse, intra-city rivalry in the state's largest metropolis might simply move to Springfield.

Of course, Election Day is more than a month away, and much can happen between now and then. But as it stands, Chicago Democrats appear poised to take control of the Executive Mansion for the first time in nearly three decades, keep the Illinois House and win the state Senate. And so far, because the traditionally fractious Democrats can almost taste the victory, that party is working to keep differences to a minimum.

There's no question, though, that Democrats throughout Illinois are united behind Blagojevich. They're thrilled at the prospect of reclaiming the governor's mansion from Republicans.

Still, some tension is apparent, even in unity. The most powerful Democrat in the Statehouse, and arguably the state, is House Speaker Michael Madigan, who also controls the 13th Ward on Chicago's Southwest Side. He invoked ward politics in stressing his support for Rod Blagojevich, the Democratic nominee for governor. Madigan pledged to prove it on Election Day the old-fashioned way.

"There's no problem between Blagojevich and [me]. Blagojevich will probably get a better vote out of the 13th Ward than he gets out of the 33rd Ward. And I'll dare his father-in-law to do better." That father-in-law, Ald. Dick Mell, is boss of the 33rd Ward on the city's Northwest Side.

In fact, U.S. Rep. Blagojevich has emerged from relative obscurity into the upper echelons of Illinois Democratic politics over the past year. Critics say he couldn't have done it

without Mell's help. Before entering the race for governor, he was little known outside of his congressional district on Chicago's Northwest Side. Now he's outpacing two-term GOP Attorney General Jim Ryan in the race to succeed retiring GOP Gov. George Ryan. In three months, he could be directing the policy agenda in Springfield.

To get his way, he would need help from Madigan, who has been calling the shots for Democrats in Springfield for two decades, and from Emil Jones, another South Sider, who is expected to win the Senate presidency should the Democrats take that chamber. Both would decide whether a governor's agenda sees the light of day.

There's no question, though, that Democrats throughout Illinois are united behind Blagojevich. They're thrilled at the prospect of reclaiming the governor's mansion from Republicans, who have occupied it since 1977. Thus, personal adjustments — and political trade-offs — could be made.

"I haven't seen unity like this since the Lyndon Johnson election of 1964," says Cook County Democratic Chairman Thomas Lyons. "Nobody is worried about upstate/downstate or whatever. Nobody is worried about anything but winning this thing."

Meanwhile, a Blagojevich victory could energize ward politics in

Chicago, where South Siders such as Madigan and Mayor Richard M. Daley have long dominated the power structure. "The South Siders feel they are intellectually brighter from a political point of view," says Thom Serafin, a Chicago-based political consultant. "They know how to play the game and they've been in charge longer." So some Democrats see Blagojevich's candidacy as an opportunity to level that playing field by establishing a substantial power base on the North Side.

Both the North and South sides are strewn with working-class neighborhoods. And there is no great philosophical divide between the two sectors. Instead, the city historically has been divided into ethnic enclaves: The Germans and Poles, for example, migrated to neighborhoods north of the Loop, while African Americans and the Irish took up residence on the South Side.

The city has been gentrified in recent years and such ethnic blocks have been diluted. Partly as a result of this phenomenon, political power no longer is centralized as it was in the 1960s and 1970s when the late Mayor Richard J. Daley, the current mayor's father, had virtual absolute control.

But several ward organizations still operate under the regular Democratic organizational umbrella. And the South Side Irish, who proved to be exceptional organizers, still claim several of the strongest ward organizations in the city. In addition to Madigan, South Side Irish ward bosses include mayoral brother John Daley, a Cook County Commissioner (11th Ward), Ald. Edward Burke (14th Ward) and Thomas Hynes, the former Cook County assessor (19th Ward).

Yet if Blagojevich wins the governor's race, North Siders will win bragging rights. "There have been some regional differences within the party and certainly having a governor from the North Side will help even up the ledger, I think," says David Axelrod, the mayor's political adviser.

There's also a practical consideration: jobs with such agencies as the state transportation department, and contracts that would be under Blagojevich's control should his gubernatorial bid be successful. In fact, North Siders

Meanwhile, a Blagojevich victory could energize ward politics in Chicago, where South Siders such as Madigan and Mayor Richard M. Daley have long dominated the power structure.

are banking on Blagojevich doling out such work, according to five other political consultants who, for reasons that are clear, asked not to be named. To the extent that he could bargain with the mayor, Blagojevich also would have control over city jobs.

But Ald. William Banks, committee-man of the 36th Ward near O'Hare International Airport, plays down this dynamic. He and Mell are considered the North Side's most powerful ward bosses. "We [Banks and Mell] have never had any conversations about power bases," Banks says. "It's all about electing Democrats."

Downstaters also are expected to figure into this equation. Downstate Democratic county chairmen, and other allies outside of Cook County, were key to Blagojevich's primary victory. In fact, Blagojevich placed only third in the city behind former Attorney General Roland Burris and former Chicago Public Schools chief Paul Vallas.

"The party leaders that had the most to do with Blagojevich's victory in the primary were really downstate county chairs," Axelrod says. "I would really look for him to build a statewide organization."

Democrats are keeping quiet about issues that could divide their party before the election. And this serves them well as they try to contrast their unity with routine eruptions between GOP leaders.

In any event, conflict within the Democratic Party has not reached the level of combat seen 30 years ago when former Gov. Dan Walker's feud with the late Chicago Mayor Richard J.

Daley cost Walker his job. Walker, who lived in suburban Deerfield, campaigned as an "independent" Democrat against Daley's political organization. He bested the machine's slated candidate, then-Lt. Gov. Paul Simon, in the 1972 primary election. He then beat Republican Richard Ogilvie, the incumbent governor, and served one term.

In 1976, Daley ran then-Secretary of State Michael Howlett against Walker. Howlett won the Democratic nomination but lost the election to Republican Jim Thompson, beginning the GOP's 26-year reign.

But Blagojevich is not a Walker-style outsider. He was not the junior Daley's first choice for Democratic nominee — the mayor wanted his brother, William, who declined to run — but the mayor is chairman of Blagojevich's campaign.

Nevertheless, Democrats are bracing for power shifts in the hierarchy of their party as they consider the prospects after November. Madigan likely will have the heaviest burden in this regard. He has controlled the House for all but one of the last 10 two-year legislative sessions.

And the speaker has not been above asserting power, even in this campaign. "I don't plan to get into any criticism of Blagojevich," Madigan says. "I could do that. I could talk about his indiscretions. But I'm not going to do that because I believe in solidarity within the political party."

Blagojevich responds: "I'm the first to admit that I'm not perfect, and I'm sure somebody could make a case about that. But the bigger issue here is we're a party that's united. And there are differences even between the leaders of our political party, but they're not deep-rooted, deep-seated."

Another Democratic leader may be in for adjustments. Chicago Mayor Daley could be dealing with a Democratic governor for the first time. His political adviser reminds, "Daley measures by only one yardstick, and that is what he can get done for the city."

Make no mistake, each politician has his own turf to protect. □

Aaron Chambers can be reached at statehousebureau@aol.com.

BRIEFLY

Courtesy of the Illinois Department of Public Health



The blue jay and the crow are under constant surveillance in Illinois for detection of the West Nile virus. However, other common species, such as the red-tail hawk (above) also can carry the virus.

Photograph by Dennis Oehmke



Photograph by Dennis Oehmke



WEST NILE

Crows sound early warning

Four decades ago, crows were nearly wiped out by DDT, an indication that widespread use of the insecticide wasn't healthy for the environment.

Ultimately, DDT was banned, so the crow's numbers are strong again. But this year, the noisy, ubiquitous black bird sounded another early warning signal.

Over the summer, a dead crow was usually the first indication public officials had that the West Nile virus, unknown in this country until three years ago, had reached another Illinois county. And by mid-September, 500 birds in 96 counties had tested positive for the virus.

Those numbers are important to state officials who have been fighting the outbreak among humans. As of mid-September, 21 Illinoisans had died from the virus, putting this state first in the nation in human fatalities.

Experts don't know why, but the crow, and the equally noisy blue jay, are most susceptible to the virus and die more often from it. Other birds have been affected, though. Nationally, more than 110 bird species, including the golden eagle, the ruby-throated hummingbird and the great blue heron, have tested positive for the virus. However, the federal Centers for Disease Control says that, like humans, most birds infected with West Nile survive, and most without becoming sick.

Carol Knowles, spokeswoman for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, says that agency has had no reports of the virus being found in any of the state's threatened or endangered species. However, zoos have felt the impact. Scovill Zoo in Decatur lost a white pelican and two Chilean flamingos. Mike Borders, the director, says the zoo had another white pelican and other flamingos that were ill, but they have recovered. The St. Louis and Detroit zoos also have had birds in their collections die from the virus. But as for other Illinois zoos, Borders says he's called around and thinks Scovill is the only one.

Meanwhile, officials at most major zoos have vaccinated their hoofed animals, and, according to Borders, many also are trying "experimental and very expensive" vaccines on their birds.

The West Nile virus was first confirmed in Illinois a year ago when two dead crows from the Chicago metropolitan area tested positive. Twenty-six species of mosquito, 19 of which are found in Illinois, carry the virus, though not all mosquitos are infected, says Robert Novak of the Illinois Natural History Survey. The northern house mosquito, *Culex pipiens*, is most common in urban areas, where most of the human cases have been reported.

The state health department has instituted a county-by-county surveillance of West Nile virus in humans, as well as in crows, blue jays, horses and mosquitos (www.idph.state.il.us/enyhealth/news/surveillance_data_02.html).

However, by the end of this month, most certainly after a hard frost, the worst of the West Nile virus scare should be over. At least for this year.

Beverly Scobell



The community built a reflecting pond at Deer Park wildlife preserve on the site of the former refinery.

WOOD RIVER

Finding ways to make industrial pollution disappear

Thomas Christie sounds like a proud papa at a piano recital when he says, "We are certainly breaking new ground with this project."

Christie, Wood River's city manager, has spent four years developing a network of governmental agencies and private interests with one goal in mind: to help clean up an 840-acre area in the heart of this Metro East community that has been ruined by 85 years of industrial contamination.

His efforts got a boost recently when the site was designated one of only five of the federal Environmental Protection Agency's special pilot projects aimed at restoring polluted sites known as "brownfields." The pilot program was designed to encourage cooperation in finding innovative ways to rehabilitate acreage previously not considered reusable.

There's much at stake for Wood River. Following closure of the local refinery, the city went into a deep economic slide. The recent announcement by the Illinois EPA that two parcels totaling 46 acres won approval for retail development marks a turning point.

The pilot program also marks a significant change in federal policies on restoring polluted sites. Recent modifications to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act now allow phased redevelopment, which spreads out the costs. Before, an entire site needed to be certified as "clean" prior to reuse.

The agreement in Wood River does have some catches. Because there is extensive contamination of groundwater on the site, the city has agreed to enforce a ban on wells throughout the community. The types of development allowed on the site could be limited as well. Nevertheless, the city was willing to make those trade-offs.

Regulatory streamlining is not the only innovation. Triad Industries, the company taking the lead in the cleanup and redevelopment of the site, is using cutting-edge methods to contain and clean topsoil. Prescribed plantings create root systems that prevent the spread of contamination and foster aeration, thereby aiding bacteria in breaking down toxic petroleum molecules into organic compounds.

Innovative uses for the recovered land are being implemented, too. One 30-acre plot has been designated as a wildlife preserve under the name "Deer Park." Nesting boxes for eastern bluebirds and tree swallows have been installed, as well as perches for raptor species such as bald eagles. The park includes a viewing stand accessible to those with disabilities, along with reflecting ponds.

All of this spells relief for Thomas Christie, who says the site represents 20 percent of the city's geographic area and once provided a \$20 million tax base. "Redevelopment here is critical."

Joseph Andrew Carrier

GOV'S ACTION

AMENDED



Anti-terrorism

Gov. George Ryan used his amendatory veto powers to tie death penalty reforms to an anti-terrorism bill. Ryan criticized an aspect of the measure that makes terrorism an offense punishable by death. While he left that provision intact, he said death penalty eligibility should not be expanded unless reforms are made in the system. Among the changes included in his veto: The death penalty could not be imposed on the basis of a single witness, accomplice or "jailhouse snitch," the Illinois Supreme Court would have to review each capital case to ensure the punishment is not excessive and is in proportion with sentences for similar offenses, and execution of the mentally retarded would be banned.

The bill, as approved by the General Assembly, was aimed at expanding investigatory powers of law enforcement officials to fight terrorism. The governor could be overridden with a three-fifths majority vote in the fall veto session.

SIGNED



DNA

Felons must provide the State Police DNA samples and all prisoners must provide DNA specimens before they are released.



Minority teachers

Eligibility for incentive programs aimed at drawing more qualified minority teachers into Illinois' classrooms has been expanded. Now, half-time and graduate students are eligible for the program's scholarships.

VETOED



Postcard solicitation

The governor vetoed legislation to make it unlawful to send a postcard asking a consumer to call a phone number to be solicited.

Aaron Chambers
and Maureen Foertsch McKinney

Q&A

Question & Answer

Kim Robinson

The former executive director of the state Capital Development Board, she heads a community committee that is following up on suggestions for redesigning the Capitol Complex and downtown Springfield.

The board oversees construction of new state facilities, including the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield. A Regional Urban Design Assistance Team, which included architects, urban planners and experts in economic development and transportation, offered what Robinson describes as an "unvarnished assessment."

One target of criticism was the



unattractive 1950s-era Stratton Office Building. The board is considering what to do about that run-down structure, which was designed to house state government offices.

Projects Editor Maureen Foertsch McKinney spoke with Robinson in her office at the Stratton about the status of those discussions.

This is an edited version of the conversation, which took place before Robinson stepped down at the end of September.

Q. Is it hard to take jabs about the unattractiveness of the Capitol Complex?

No. I completely understand. I love Springfield, but I've traveled some, and I've been to other state capitals. I really think we could do better. This building is a good example. We're at a critical point. We either have to make the decision to spend what will be very significant funds to renovate it or we have to replace it.

Q. Do you have an estimate?

The estimates I have are very general. It's going to be at least \$90 million just to renovate it. To replace it, it depends. It could be anywhere from \$130 million to \$160 million.

The building needs to be repaired. This hole has been in my ceiling for three years. There are probably 1,000 of those in this building. We have to do something about it. If the sentiment really is that this should be replaced, then we need to make that decision now.

Q. What can the state do to work with the city?

We've had some good dialogue. I hope that at some point in the future the state will look at formalizing that relationship so there's some sort of ongoing planning and design committee. I don't care how it's structured. I just care that the right people are sitting there to make decisions about how these buildings get sited, and what the architecture looks like, and how the Capitol Complex looks with the rest of Springfield.

There's also some thought [being] given to whether we should have a Capitol architect. Once we're paying more attention to [the design of the Capitol Complex], I think we'll make better decisions.

With the Lincoln Library and Museum coming, something has to happen with this building. Hopefully, those issues will cause a re-examination of what we're doing and will lead to some improvement. □

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Stay curious



SURVEY **Voters: Cut** **health care costs**

The cost of health care was a top concern among Illinoisans who were polled by the University of Illinois at Springfield's Survey Research Office.

More than 42 percent of those surveyed ranked the cost of health care and medication as most important among choices they were given.

In the survey, conducted this summer, 496 Illinoisans were asked to rate the relative importance of such issues as health care, the economy and job growth, education, crime, political corruption and traffic congestion. The greatest mean score was health care, which was closely followed by jobs and the economy.

Respondents, who were 18 and older, also were asked in an open-ended question to cite issues they found to be important. On that question, the most common response was the budget, government spending and taxes.

Sean Hogan, assistant director of survey research at the university, says, "We hope people in policy-making positions and those actively involved in campaigns will take notice so that when they make their judgments they are more aware."

Maureen Foertsch McKinney

UPDATES **Death Row and steel**

- The Illinois Prisoner Review Board will examine the cases of some 159 Death Row inmates for possible clemency by Gov. George Ryan (see *Illinois Issues*, June, page 6).

- The Illinois Supreme Court dismissed Death Row inmate Mark Ballard's argument that the state's death penalty statute is unconstitutional because it doesn't sufficiently narrow the class of defendants eligible for death (see *Illinois Issues*, October 2001, page 30).

- President George W. Bush's administration scaled back the steel tariffs it approved last spring (see *Illinois Issues*, September, page 31).

WORKSHOP

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Clean sweep?

Illinois Democrats pin their fall hopes on a big broom

Analysis by Dave McKinney
Photograph by Diana L. C. Nelson

How often does Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan chuck his suit, tie and precise lawyerly prose, don a loud, canary-yellow polo shirt, and get plain lippy? Not often, which is why a \$3 ticket to the Illinois State Fair during one sultry day last August was such a bargain.

Somehow, this guy, who has been an imposing political force for decades but never so much a physical presence, carried himself as if he were Muhammad Ali, prophesying Republican doom. Hoisting a broom, Madigan's trash talk put hundreds of union members on their feet with fists in the air, certain they will see a political version of the rope-a-dope spring from the Democratic playbook this fall.

"I want you to go find the biggest broom in your house and get ready for a clean sweep in November!" Madigan said, his characteristic, Southwest Side cadence saturated with Ali confidence and swagger.

If Madigan is right, state government could turn decidedly pro-union soon, meaning a possible rollback of constraints placed on teachers by Chicago school reform and enhanced benefits for workers in and out of government. At the same time, many corporate tax breaks ushered in under Republicans could be closed in the name of boosting the state budget.

It would be one thing to suggest that Republican George Ryan's

scandal-plagued tenure has put the governor's office within reach for Democrats. It has. But Madigan and the Democrats are talking about doing something their party hasn't pulled off since before World War II: occupying every major statewide office, holding the General Assembly and controlling the Illinois Supreme Court, all at the same time.

How could this happen? How is it that a party that hasn't won the Executive Mansion in 30 years, that once was infiltrated by followers of political extremist Lyndon LaRouche, and that just eight years ago lost nearly everything in Springfield is now so certain it's capable of putting Republicans down for the count?

Sure, there appears to be a national trend toward Democrats halfway into Republican President George W. Bush's first term. But in Illinois, there is only one reason that matters, and that is the incumbent governor.

While not charged with wrongdoing himself, George Ryan hasn't been able to escape the shadow of a truck licenses-for-bribes scandal that led to the deaths of six children and other motorists while he served as secretary of state. Money he so generously spread around to his political followers seems tainted now that federal prosecutors have charged his campaign fund with being a criminal enterprise. Further, he's been dogged by policy contradictions during

his tenure as governor. In particular, taxes were raised during his watch after he had campaigned against allowing that to happen.

The result: George Ryan's approval rating among Illinois voters is at a historic low for governors.

And, in a politically tragic twist, the Republican who wants to succeed Gov. Ryan shares his last name. This is not to say that Jim Ryan, no relation to George Ryan, has lost the governor's race already. He hasn't. He's resilient. The attorney general survived cancer and the death of his daughter. And, as a teenage Golden Gloves champion, he has the instincts of a fighter.

"Any boxer will tell you that what happens in the early rounds of a fight doesn't matter much," Jim Ryan says. "That's when there's all the calculation, and people are kind of dancing and feeling each other out. I'll tell you when it matters: in the later rounds. That's when people take off the gloves. That's when you come out of the corners, plant your feet and fight back."

For Jim Ryan, the early rounds have meant using precious time and capital reminding voters which Ryan he is, that he can restore the trust he says George Ryan has squandered. Yet, try as he might to distance himself from the incumbent governor, Jim Ryan is lagging far behind Democratic gubernatorial nominee Rod Blagojevich in polling. *A St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

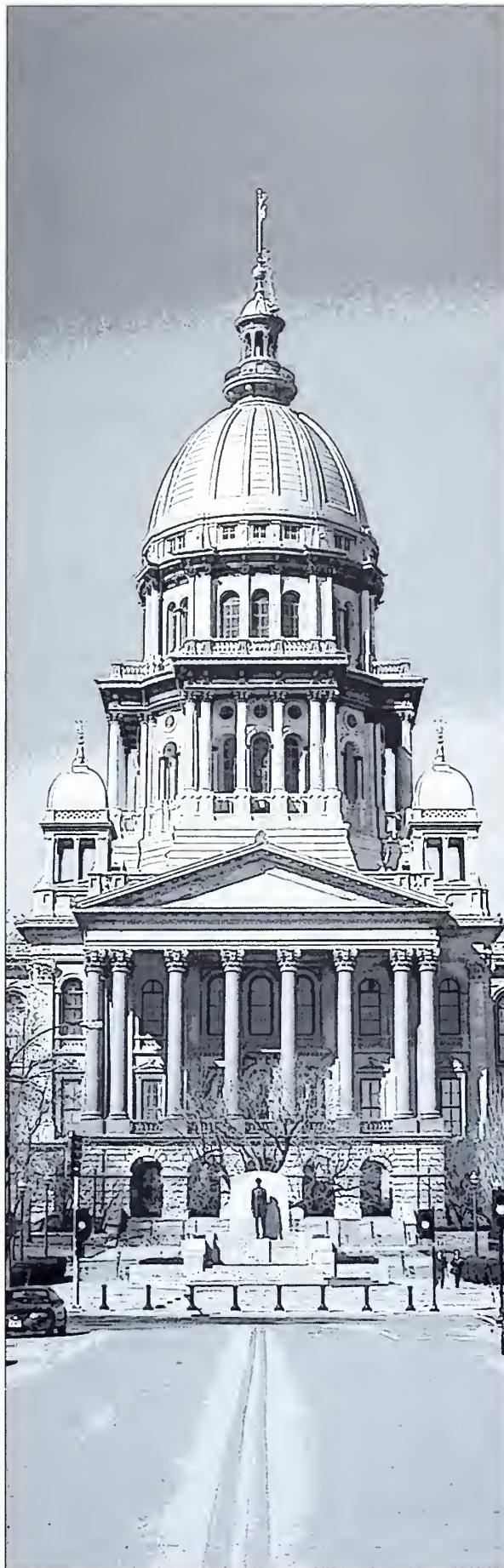
survey taken in late August put the spread at nearly 15 points, 48.6 percent to 34 percent in favor of Blagojevich. Later polls show a wider gap.

There are other troubles. The governor's deepening legal problems have caused political donations for Jim Ryan to pale compared to past GOP gubernatorial candidates, and Republicans as a group seem less energized and less prone to bring out the vote than at any point in a generation.

And the attorney general isn't the only Republican facing problems. The GOP's candidates for U.S. Senate (Rep. Jim Durkin of Westchester), secretary of state (Kris O'Rourke Cohn of Rockford) and comptroller (Thomas Jefferson Ramsdell of Wilmette) are neither well-known nor well-funded. And DuPage County State's Attorney Joe Birkett of Wheaton faces the speaker's daughter, Lisa Madigan, in a race for attorney general, which Mike Madigan has made clear is his No. 1 priority.

Beyond Jim Ryan, the only Republican who has run statewide before is Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka of Riverside, who is as popular and effervescent as they come but could fall victim to an upset by state Rep. Tom Dart of Chicago in a heavy Democratic year because she is so far down the ballot. Illustrative of how screwy things are this year for Republicans, she has more money in the bank than anyone else on the GOP ticket, including Jim Ryan.

But Jim Ryan faces additional challenges. Beyond struggling to get the money to present his case in television ads, he simply isn't as glib as the immensely well-funded Blagojevich, often seeming distant and cold. It's difficult to picture the two-term attorney general invoking the name of Elvis Presley on the campaign stump, as the relaxed-looking Blagojevich did on the eve of the 25th anniversary of the King's death.



"It's been 30 years since we elected a governor," Blagojevich said. "Thirty years ago, Elvis was alive and doing Vegas. It's been 30 years of *Heartbreak Hotel* for the Democrats, but when we win in November, the Republicans will be *All Shook Up*."

To counter such bluster, one of Jim Ryan's newest and most salient themes is that Democrats want too much and, if left unchecked, could turn Illinois into a very unfriendly place for business, dominated politically by Big Labor.

"Obviously, if we lost the legislature, the judiciary and the executive branch of state government, our party would be in trouble," says the attorney general, who has already pronounced a Democrat-run Senate a near certainty after almost 10 years of GOP rule. "This goes beyond partisan politics. This is about some balance in government, some checks and balances."

And he's right. In Illinois politics, rarely has one party had it all. Republicans came close in 1994, when the GOP won every statewide office and control of the legislature. But if Democrats duplicate that feat, as the attorney general notes, they would have a distinct advantage the Republicans didn't have in the mid-1990s: control of the Supreme Court. Democrats now govern the state's high court by a 5-2 margin. That court is responsible for blocking several prized GOP initiatives from 1995 through 1997, ranging from caps on lawsuit awards to parental notice requirements for teens seeking abortions. Democrats controlled the governor's office, the legislature and the Supreme Court from 1975 to 1977, during Democrat Gov. Dan Walker's final two years in office, and amid national fallout from Watergate. But that wasn't a complete shutout because Comptroller George Lindberg and Attorney General William Scott, both Republicans,

The clean sweep Madigan hopes for last occurred during the late 1950s under Republican Gov. William Stratton. For Democrats, that kind of grip on power last happened in 1937 during the depths of the Great Depression.

were in the middle of their terms.

Ten years earlier, Democrats seized on public sympathy surrounding President John F. Kennedy's assassination and won the governor's office, every other contested statewide office and the legislature. They already controlled the court. But, again, two Republican holdovers elected in 1962 to four-year terms remained in government: William Scott, who was then treasurer, and Ray Page, who was the state school superintendent.

The clean sweep Madigan hopes for last occurred during the late 1950s under Republican Gov. William Stratton. The GOP ruled the roost by holding all of the major statewide offices, the legislature and the Supreme Court. For Democrats, that kind of grip on power last happened in 1937 during the depths of the Great Depression, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's popularity was on the rise. Democratic Gov. Henry Horner coasted to a second term, helping his party win both legislative chambers as well as lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state, treasurer, state school superintendent and auditor of public accounts, the precursor to today's comptroller. That party also controlled the Supreme Court.

The only member of the Democratic ticket who was around then was Secretary of State Jesse White, who was 3 in 1937. Madigan was born five years later, and the party's choice for governor this year, Blagojevich, wasn't born

for another 20 years.

Hoping to replicate that Depression-era showing, traditional Democratic allies — from unions to trial lawyers to consumer groups to human services advocates — are busy plotting their legislative agendas for next spring, banking on the sweep Madigan has forecast. Much of what they seek has passed the Democrat-controlled House in recent years, only to languish in the GOP-run Senate.

A sampling of what may await under all-Democrat rule includes:

- Restoration of collective bargaining rights taken from the Chicago Teachers Union by the GOP-crafted school reform law of 1995. The unions want to regain the right to bargain over class size, charter schools and other nonsalary-related issues;
- Expansion of benefits for workers by increasing the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour, putting Illinois' pay benchmark above all of its neighbors, and granting paid time off for family emergencies. Federal family leave benefits enacted under former President Bill Clinton are unpaid;
- Creation of a new drug-buying co-op for senior citizens in which the state would leverage lower prices from pharmaceutical companies;
- Elimination of subsidies to Republican horseracing magnate Richard Duchossois and a variety of GOP-crafted tax breaks granted corporations over the years to fill likely budget holes;
- Requirement of more aggressive state action against doctors with long malpractice records, including more disclosure of their lawsuit awards and settlements;
- Elimination of housing and employment discrimination against gays and lesbians.

Of course, if Democrats live up to their high expectations and orchestrate a sweep, they'll have to prove they can get along with one another before any of these initiatives can become law. And this might not be easy for that contentious party.

Historically, Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley and Speaker Madigan have had an on-again, off-again relationship, despite sharing political roots as delegates to the 1970 Illinois constitutional

convention. Both have been strong advocates for Chicago, but they have had very public differences. In a rare public display of their rivalry, Madigan backed Chicago Ald. Edward Burke over Daley for Cook County state's attorney in 1980. Daley and Madigan also have clashed over past gubernatorial and Cook County board president candidates. But of late, Daley and Madigan seem to be on the same page politically. Daley endorsed the speaker's daughter, Lisa Madigan, for attorney general in January over his former chief of staff, John Schmidt.

Of more immediate concern are signs of a split between Madigan and Blagojevich. Before the broom-hoisting at the State Fair, the Democratic nominee for governor criticized Madigan's "arrogance" for securing a \$300,000 state grant for a college pal and horse show aficionado at a time when vital state human services were on the chopping block. In a clear warning shot, the speaker said he could have revealed past "indiscretions" by the party's candidate for governor, but chose not to in the name of political unity. What indiscretions? Neither side would say.

"There will be differences, even among Democrats, should I be governor," Blagojevich says. "You're not always going to agree. I don't always agree with my wife, and she certainly doesn't always agree with me. So there are going to be those problems. But we keep our eye on the ball.

"It's the big picture that really matters: how we're going to improve schools, grow our economy, [provide access to] prescription drugs for our seniors, health care, restore ethics and honesty. On those issues there is no disagreement. Our party is speaking as one."

If the party can possibly speak as one in the event of a November sweep, will the Democrat doing most of the talking be Blagojevich, Daley or Madigan? Absent any Republican surprises, that story line won't begin to unfold until January. But in such a scenario, Madigan's spot in the party power structure already seems a notch or two above everyone else's. Anything Daley or Blagojevich would want

would have to come through the Madigan-run House. If Republicans can't escape Gov. Ryan's troubles, Madigan has few qualms about checks and balances in state government.

Those will exist, he says, "if there is a strong, responsive leader in the legislature." Attentive listeners noticed his singular use of the word "leader." Indeed, after November 5, Room 300

of the State Capitol may be home to the heavyweight champion of state government. □

Dave McKinney is Statehouse bureau chief for the Chicago Sun-Times.

Executive suite

The race is on to become the 40th Illinoisan to move into the governor's office

by Aaron Chambers

Jim Ryan is in fight mode. He wants to govern the fifth-largest state in the nation, so that's to be expected. What's surprising is that he's playing defense.

For Ryan, and for his Republican Party, the battle over rights to the governor's office has turned into something of a nail-biter, at least through the early rounds. And this has party strategists sweating. What's more, as the GOP's leading contender, Ryan shoulders substantial responsibility for the success of his party's entire statewide slate, and much will depend on his ability to draw supporters to the polls on Election Day.

But this has been an unexpected come-from-behind match for Ryan. The early odds seemed to favor his chances. After all, Republicans have held the Executive Mansion since 1977. And a year ago, few would have predicted the two-term Illinois attorney general, who enjoys positive name recognition throughout the state, would now be considered the underdog against Democrat Rod Blagojevich, a congressman who before this race was little known outside his North Side Chicago district.

Yet the Republican nominee is behind in fundraising, in major endorsements and in most polls. He faces some fairly daunting challenges before November 5.

The biggest is one he inherited: He'll have to find a way to overcome the negative images that continue to cling to prominent members of his own party, among them the GOP incumbent governor, George Ryan. Throughout Ryan's

tenure in the Executive Mansion, the federal government has continued to investigate corrupt activities alleged to have taken place in the secretary of state's office while it was under Ryan's control. Though the governor has not been accused of wrongdoing, Operation Safe Road, as the investigation is called, has produced 57 defendants and 47 convictions. Jim Ryan, no relation to the governor, says George Ryan should explain his role in alleged corruption or step down.

But Operation Safe Road is not the GOP's only problem. Illinois House Minority Leader Lee Daniels resigned as chairman of the state Republican Party this summer amid allegations his legislative staff did campaign work on state time.

The GOP's challenges are clear. A poll released in late August put Ryan more than 14 points behind Blagojevich. The survey of 814 likely Illinois voters, conducted by Utica, N.Y.-based Zogby

International for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, found that 48.6 percent of the respondents would vote for Blagojevich compared to 34 percent for Ryan. Just as telling, in the same poll, Gov. Ryan registered a 69 percent disapproval rating. A more recent poll conducted by the *Chicago Tribune* underlines one of Jim Ryan's problems. That poll, also conducted in August, shows a 17 percent gap in Blagojevich's favor until the distinction between Jim Ryan and George Ryan is made clear, when it narrows to 10 percent.

"It's unfortunate that Gov. Ryan has had the difficulties he's had," says former Republican Gov. Jim Edgar. "If that wasn't here, I think Jim Ryan would have a 10-point lead in the polls. There's no doubt in my mind."

Of course, what troubles the Republicans boosts the Democrats.

"If a 'time for change' argument is going to work anywhere, it's going to work in Illinois," says John Kohut, gubernatorial race analyst at the Washington-based *Cook Political Report*. The report favors Blagojevich, he says, because Jim Ryan has been unable to get his message heard over coverage of Republican Party-related scandal. "It's like Ryan just can't get a break."

Blagojevich's remarkably strong showing is an advantage rarely enjoyed by past Democratic candidates for governor. And as the perceived front-runner, he's positioned to attract even more money and support. In politics, this perception

On the Web

For more information on the gubernatorial candidates and their positions:

www.rodforus.com

www.jimryanforgovernor.com

www.skinner4governor.org

Visit the state Board of Elections at www.elections.state.il.us for information on all candidates and to see campaign finance reports.

tends to become a self-fulfilling prophesy.

Especially when it comes to the money. At the end of June, the Blagojevich campaign had spent \$8.6 million over the course of the past year, while Ryan's campaign spent \$8.4 million. But these numbers may be more to the point: Going into the official start of the campaign, Blagojevich had \$3.8 million left in the bank, while Ryan had \$689,809. Both campaigns say they are raising more.

Those dollars likely will go toward paid media as both campaigns attempt to dominate the air waves in the final weeks before Election Day. But for the most part the candidates' strategies seem set. And, in that regard, Ryan, a former Golden Gloves boxer, has been forced to assume a defensive posture.

One of Ryan's central themes is that voters should support him and the rest of his party as a way to prevent Chicago Democrats from controlling state government. The success of this message, which has played well in past statewide campaigns, rests on stoking voters' fears. Ryan struck this chord last summer at the Illinois State Fair, the unofficial launch of Illinois campaigns. During a live sit-down interview, Ryan suggested to Sports Radio 1450, an AM station based in Springfield, that voters should be on guard. Democrats, he noted, run the Illinois House, where Chicagoan Michael Madigan is speaker. Democrats are poised to win the Senate, too, where Chicagoan Emil Jones is in line to become president.

Painting Democratic control of the Senate — and therefore the entire General Assembly — as all but certain, Ryan said, "Right now, with reapportionment, we'll probably lose the legislature. That's the likelihood."

Further, Chicago Democrats Jesse White and Dan Hynes hold the secretary of state's office and the comptroller's office, respectively. Chicago Democrat Tom Dart is running a strong race for state treasurer. Sen. Lisa Madigan, the speaker's daughter and another Chicago Democrat, is a candidate for attorney general. And Democrats hold five of the Illinois Supreme Court's seven seats.

Portraying the Democrats as greedy,



Democrat Rod Blagojevich

Ryan said, "Now they want the executive branch."

Then he suggested Chicagoans would focus on Cook County's needs but neglect those of the remaining 101 counties. "Now I love Chicago," he said, "and believe me, I'm not trying to pit one part of the state against another. But come on, there's not one member of the Democratic state ticket that's even from [suburban] Cook County. Well, what about the other 101 counties? Who will be representing them?"

Of course, the GOP candidates for statewide office don't hail from every major region of the state, either. The party's candidate for lieutenant governor, Sen. Carl Hawkinson, is from Galesburg. And Kris O'Rourke Cohn, the party's nominee for secretary of state, lives in Rockford. The remaining candidates, including Ryan, live in the suburban region around Chicago.

Yet Ryan hits the partisan bottom line: "We need a Republican governor, frankly, to veto legislation that will be bad for the state." He puts the former Structural Work Act in that category. The law, repealed in 1995 when Republicans controlled both chambers of the legislature, provided construction workers in "extra-hazardous" conditions with avenues of compensation for injuries outside worker's compensation. Blagojevich supports re-enacting the law.

Jim Ryan does have a compelling story to tell, though he faces difficulty in getting that story out. He's a more seasoned campaigner and a more

experienced officeholder. Ryan ran for statewide office three times previously, losing his first race for attorney general in 1990 to Democrat Roland Burris. He won election to the post in 1994 and was re-elected in 1998. Before becoming chief legal officer for the state, Ryan, who lives in Elmhurst, served three terms as DuPage County state's attorney.

A string of personal tragedies does appear to have struck a chord with voters, as well. Last November, he was diagnosed with his third bout of cancer in five years. A growth behind his right ear was removed and was determined to be a form of lymphoma, though less aggressive than his earlier lymphomas. His doctors reported that his condition has been treated.

In 1997, Ryan lost his 12-year-old daughter Anne Marie to an undetected noncancerous tumor at the base of her head and faced the near-death of his wife, Marie, to a cardiac arrest.

"I want my life to count," Ryan says. "I've had a lot of adversity in my life. I can make a difference in this job of governor."

Gary MacDougal, the new chairman of the Illinois Republican Party, adds, "Here's a guy you can trust. He's got the character, whether it came out of his upbringing or the battle with cancer, or whatever. He's a guy that wants to make a difference."

Ryan has used his position as the state's chief legal officer to try to make some difference on a few fronts. One was an anti-trust lawsuit against Microsoft Corp., which he joined. His office also



Republican Jim Ryan

issued an opinion last year that prevailing union wages must be paid on Illinois First infrastructure construction jobs. He caught heat from the business community in both instances. Still, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce endorsed him and his running mate, state Sen. Carl Hawkinson, in this race.

Ryan also followed the lead of other states by joining a landmark lawsuit against the tobacco industry. Illinois won an expected \$9.1 billion settlement that has helped fund property tax rebates and a series of public health initiatives. On that issue, though, he continues to face criticism for his handling of the legal fees. One of the outside law firms he hired was Freeborn & Peters, where Ryan's friend Fred Foreman is a partner. The attorney general initially agreed to pay Freeborn & Peters and other outside lawyers representing the state 10 percent of whatever Illinois got in the lawsuit, which would be as much as \$910 million. He now argues outside counsel are entitled to no more than the \$121 million in fees they received from a national arbitration panel. The dispute over roughly \$800 million in fees remains in court.

Not long after taking office, he demonstrated a willingness to buck forces within his own party. He blocked GOP Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka's plan to settle more than \$40 million in outstanding state loans for \$10 million. The state loans in question had been given to powerful Republican fundraiser William Cellini and bipartisan political donor Gary Fears to develop hotels in

Springfield and Collinsville in the early 1980s. But after a lengthy period of skipped loan repayments, Topinka argued the investors should be allowed to pay what she believed the hotels were worth by her calculations. Ryan halted that agreement, producing estimates by the University of Illinois that valued the hotels at closer to \$20 million.

The hotels remain in operation, but the state has yet to be repaid.

Similarly, this summer Ryan threatened to stand in the way of a settlement between the Illinois Gaming Board and Emerald Casino Inc. The board denied the company's application for a license after accusing its officers of lying to the board and selling shares to mob-connected investors. Ryan objected to a provision in the proposed settlement that would have let Emerald recoup profit from its sale of the license.

A subsequent settlement calls for all of Emerald's investors to get their money back and for some Emerald creditors to be repaid. Ryan indicated support for this agreement. But Rosemont, the village that expected to host Emerald's casino, sued to void the settlement.

Meanwhile, Ryan's efforts at getting his proposals through the General Assembly and past the governor's desk have had mixed results. He succeeded in winning the Sexually Violent Persons Commitment Act, which permits the state to keep convicted sex offenders in civil confinement indefinitely. And he successfully promoted a law requiring repeat rapists to serve life in prison.

But in the past year, he's been unable

to win approval of his anti-terrorism package. The bill would create several new crimes and enhance the investigatory powers of law enforcement officials. It has passed the legislature twice since last year's terrorist attacks, but the governor vetoed it in both instances. The sticking point: a provision that would make terrorists who kill eligible for the death penalty. The governor wants lawmakers to first consider recommendations for reforming the administration of the death penalty that were advanced by his commission. He tacked some of those recommendations onto the bill and sent it back to lawmakers.

The attorney general says he will do his "utmost" during the legislature's fall veto session to get his own provisions into law.

As a manager, Jim Ryan gets good marks. He evidently was effective in reorganizing the office he inherited from Burris.

The state auditor general reported in a routine audit that the office, under Burris' command, mismanaged \$716,070 worth of computer database contracts. All told, auditors said the office either did not meet mandates for performance or violated accounting principles in 11 instances.

When Ryan took over in 1995, the office abandoned the database projects, created a new position with responsibility over contract management, and enhanced its contract review process. The most recent audit, published last summer, reported no findings of non-compliance.

Yet controversial policy decisions do seem to follow Ryan. The longest-running criticism stems from his career as a prosecutor. In his previous post as DuPage County state's attorney, Ryan presided over much of the prosecution of Rolando Cruz and Alejandro Hernandez, who were convicted and sentenced to death for the 1983 murder of Jeanine Nicarico. Both men later were cleared of the crime, providing important fuel to Gov. Ryan's moratorium on state executions.

Jim Ryan was not implicated in wrongdoing. And the Cruz case has not played a prominent role in the gubernatorial race. Nor has the ongoing battle over tobacco legal fees. Instead,

Education

Republican Jim Ryan and Democrat Rod Blagojevich have similar plans for improving education — except when it comes to administering the state system and bargaining with Chicago teachers.

Both gubernatorial candidates say they will keep Gov. George Ryan's pledge to commit 51 percent of new state revenues to education.

Both pledge to give special attention to improving childhood reading by strengthening early childhood education initiatives. Along that line, Ryan pledges to double the state's annual \$80 million grant to schools for reading programs to \$160 million. And rather than disbursing the money to districts based on the number of pupils, Ryan would give it to schools with high numbers of children living in poverty and those with successful reading initiatives.

Both promise to address the state's teacher shortage. The Illinois State Board of Education in January estimated that this state needs 55,000 more teachers by 2006 to keep up with student demand.

Both promise not to raise sales or income taxes, though Gov. Ryan's Education Funding Advisory Board, which released its report in August, says education funding needs to net at least another \$1.8 billion annually. (The board's recommendations are online at www.isbe.state.il.us/EFAB.) The candidates say they would "reprioritize" state spending instead.

There are differences. Ryan would replace the Board of Education with a state secretary of education who would answer to the governor rather than the much-criticized board. Blagojevich says shifting bureaucracy is not the way to improve education.

And Blagojevich, who as a state lawmaker voted against the Chicago school reform law of 1995, wants to restore the Chicago Teachers Union's right to bargain and strike over such issues as class size and charter schools, which it lost in the 1995 law. Ryan opposes that idea.

The Illinois Education Association, the state's largest teachers organization, and the Illinois Federation of Teachers endorsed Blagojevich. *Aaron Chambers*

Blagojevich has kept heat on him for not investigating allegations of corruption in George Ryan's secretary of state's office. Ryan responds that he didn't want to impede a federal investigation.

When he does take the offensive, he's fond of citing a *Chicago Tribune* report that Blagojevich missed more than half the votes in the U.S. House last spring. "If you missed work every other day, would your boss give you a promotion?" Ryan asks. "I don't think so." The Blagojevich camp responds that the congressman is dividing his time between Capitol Hill and the campaign trail.

Rod Blagojevich, who also is a former Golden Gloves boxer, has made a name for himself in Washington, D.C. He pushed for a national sales tax holiday and voted for an airport security plan that makes screeners in most airports federal employees.

He has focused much of his effort in Congress on gun control, including his call for a ban on civilian sales of .50-caliber long-range military sniper rifles. He helped get \$1.25 million allocated to trace guns found at crime sites. And he filed legislation requiring gun show promoters to perform background checks on gun purchasers.

In 1997, he blasted the U.S. Navy's plan to ship napalm through the Chicago area. The plan was cancelled.

But Blagojevich, who is of Serbian descent, is perhaps best known for traveling to that country in 1999 with the Rev. Jesse Jackson to negotiate the release of three American soldiers.

Still, Ryan's camp points out that since Blagojevich won his first of three terms in Congress in 1995, only one bill for which he was the lead sponsor has been signed into law. That bill, approved two years ago by former President Bill Clinton, renamed a post office in Chicago.

Blagojevich aides respond that the congressman co-sponsored numerous bills and amendments. They note that, with Democrats in the U.S. House minority, major legislation leaving that chamber tends to be sponsored by Republicans. "That's a reflection of the way the system works in Washington, as much as anything, when you're a relatively new member of the minority

party in the House of Representatives," says David Stricklin, chief of staff in Blagojevich's congressional office.

In Springfield, where Blagojevich served two terms in the Illinois House, he was one of the first state lawmakers to push for a truth-in-sentencing law, under which the worst violent offenders must serve 85 percent to 100 percent of their sentences. He was a Cook County prosecutor before joining the General Assembly.

Indeed, Blagojevich has all but usurped Ryan's status as the candidate most dedicated to law enforcement. Ryan is a career prosecutor who also was a proponent of truth-in-sentencing. Yet the Illinois Fraternal Order of Police, the state's largest police organization, endorsed Blagojevich and his running mate, former state Treasurer Pat Quinn of Chicago.

FOP leaders argue Blagojevich is a strong proponent of hiring more police, buying more equipment for them and boosting their pensions.

Ted Street, the group's president, says Ryan's decision not to investigate alleged corruption in the secretary of state's office was among the FOP's considerations in choosing Blagojevich. The attorney general, who won the group's endorsement during his race last spring, called FOP leaders "union bosses" who sold out members.

Blagojevich faces a few controversies of his own. Chicago Ald. Dick Mell, a powerful North Side ward boss and Blagojevich's father-in-law, is widely believed to be pulling the strings behind Blagojevich's primary campaign. Thus, the congressman has been forced to defend his independence.

"Why should people believe that Rod Blagojevich, who basically learned his politics at the knee of a Chicago ward boss, is gonna change the political culture of this state?" Ryan asks. "I don't buy it."

But the success of Blagojevich's primary race, and his current campaign, do not rest on Mell alone. The congressman also has support from such high-profile figures as U.S. Rep. William Lipinski, a Chicago Democrat. Subsequent to the March primary, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley signed on as Blagojevich's campaign chair.

Labor organizations, including the Illinois AFL-CIO, also are behind him. "We've said [in previous election cycles] we can do it this time," Margaret Blackshere, the union's president, told a crowded Democratic rally, referring to a potential Democratic sweep this fall. "Folks, brothers and sisters, we *can* do it this time."

And Blagojevich's support spans the state. Democratic officials in the Metro East region, including state Rep. Jay Hoffman of Collinsville and U.S. Rep. Jerry Costello of Belleville, also play an integral part in Blagojevich's effort. That region, across the Mississippi River from St. Louis, is the state's largest Democratic stronghold behind Chicago.

But Gov. George Ryan has affected this race to a great degree. Both candidates are defining their campaigns, to some extent, in relation to his administration. In addition to promising to raise "ethical standards," they both say the state budget, which grew by \$14 billion to almost \$52.5 billion over Gov. Ryan's term, contains wasteful programs and should be reprioritized. (It should be noted that while "all funds" appropriations, which encompass a variety of appropriations and reappropriations, grew \$14 billion from Edgar's last budget to the current one, general funds appropriations, which include only state spending, grew less than \$3 billion from \$19.9 billion to \$22.3 billion.)

Both also are critical of so-called member initiatives — unspecified projects that are divided among individual members. But on this and other matters, the candidates offer vague proposals for change. For example, they suggest that a widely publicized \$300,000 appropriation for a livestock show run by a former classmate of Madigan's was irresponsible when lawmakers struggled last spring to balance the state budget.

"Those member initiatives are precisely the things that should be on the back burner and are not the kind of priority that I would make if I were governor," Blagojevich says. "The decisions I would make would be focused on improving schools, growing our economy and making sure that we protect our public properly."

And both candidates say they would oppose increases in the state sales or

Economic development

Democrat Rod Blagojevich wants to share \$200 million in venture capital with businesses in economically depressed regions of Illinois. He says the state should create a fund for investors, then direct the dollars through venture capitalists to downstate businesses. Investors would get a return on their dollars when the upstarts profit. And if the investments fail, the investors could get breaks on their state taxes.

"We are going to bring jobs and opportunity to parts of our state that have been left behind," Blagojevich says.

But there are major obstacles to making such a plan work. According to Mark Heesen, president of the National Venture Capital Association, about 80 percent of venture capital dollars come from tax exempt entities such as pension funds or college endowments. Those entities would not be persuaded to invest by the promise of tax breaks should the investments not pan out. Corporations and wealthy individuals do participate in venture capital but to a much lesser extent.

In addition, venture capitalists resist restrictions on their ability to invest money. "Some states have tried to bring venture capital into those states," says Heesen. "But they say, 'If we raise this fund, you can only invest within the borders.' And most venture capitalists won't even accept that kind of money because there are too many strings attached."

Achieving job growth under Blagojevich's plan could take several years. His campaign says the venture capital drive, together with other components of his economic development plan, including expansion of O'Hare International Airport, could create 250,000 jobs.

Republican Jim Ryan also has a venture capital plan, though it's less extensive than the Democrat's. Ryan states simply that he would "develop a plan to leverage state resources with private venture capital to secure seed and early stage funds to help Illinois' entrepreneurs and innovators. ... Availability of venture capital is an important component in start-up and relocation decisions of technology firms."

Ryan's development program is centered, instead, on business-friendly laws. "Government does not create jobs," Ryan is fond of saying. "Business creates jobs."

He says he would work to prevent moves he argues would hinder business. For example, Ryan opposes re-enactment of the former Structural Work Act, which was repealed in 1995 when Republicans controlled both chambers of the legislature. The law provided construction workers in "extra-hazardous" conditions with avenues of compensation for injuries beyond worker's compensation. But critics contend such laws make doing business in Illinois too expensive. Blagojevich says he would sign that act back into law.

Ryan also wants to make it easier for businesses to qualify for a state development tax credit in order to attract them to economically depressed regions. Under current law, a business must create 25 new jobs and invest \$5 million to qualify. Ryan would lower that threshold to 10 new jobs and a \$1 million investment.

Both candidates have pledged to make agricultural growth a top priority. Blagojevich wants to spend "more than \$25 million" to boost expansion of so-called "value-added" agricultural cooperatives where farmers work together to develop products from their harvests.

He pledges to extend the sales tax incentive for ethanol, which expires July 2003, and create a similar incentive for soy-based biodiesel fuels.

Ryan also pledges to promote ethanol and other value-added products. He wants to expand funding for C-FAR, the state's agricultural research program.

The candidates differ on whether to raise the minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour. Under current law, Illinois defers to federal guidelines on minimum wage. Blagojevich wants to change state law to raise Illinois' minimum wage to \$6.50. Ryan says that would put Illinois businesses at a competitive disadvantage with other states.

Aaron Chambers

income tax. "We have to spend less and save more," says Ryan, who wants to create a panel to examine how to improve the budget.

Ryan and Blagojevich say they support the death penalty but that the governor's moratorium is appropriate while the system is being examined. And they each vow to make education and health care funding top priorities.

Then there are the differences.

The candidates don't agree on how to expand Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. Blagojevich supports expansion consistent with an agreement between Gov. Ryan and Chicago Mayor Daley, which would add new runways and reconfigure existing runways. Jim Ryan does not support displacing homeowners in Bensenville, which would be required to implement that agreement.

The centerpiece of Ryan's economic development plan is easing business growth with business-friendly laws. "Government does not create jobs," he says repeatedly. "Business creates jobs." Blagojevich's plan comes down to

collecting and pumping venture capital into Illinois.

Both oppose legal recognition of same-sex marriages, though Blagojevich supports extending insurance benefits to domestic partners of gay public employees.

And both have positions they don't want to talk about.

Ryan opposes abortion except in cases where the mother's life is at risk. But he plays down this position, saying the governor cannot overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion. Blagojevich supports abortion rights.

For his part, Blagojevich sponsored state legislation to raise the fee for a firearm owner's identification card — an unpopular move among gun owners. The bill died, but Blagojevich has difficulty making this footnote go away. He says he would no longer support such an increase.

Of course, running the executive branch is more complex than the candidates portray it to be. When the gover-

nor wants to affect policy, he must deal with two chambers of the legislature. All the while, he must navigate other political currents and a national economy no governor can control.

Gov. Ryan, infuriated with the candidates' focus on him, says, "If Jim Ryan gets elected governor, he'll find out what it takes to be governor and have a better understanding of what it's all about. And I think that's true with Rod Blagojevich as well."

For at least the next two months, though, the candidates will be focused on winning, not governing. At the State Fair, the political parties collected their candidates and rallied their troops before the fall campaign season.

But as the Democrats consider the prospect of winning the governor's mansion — and the Republicans consider the possibility of losing it — there were stark differences in tone between their respective supporters.

The Democrats, in a rally on the lawn of the fair director's home, displayed an energy not seen in recent history. Even

There are other choices

Cal Skinner intends to win this gubernatorial race against two formidable opponents by starting with tobacco smokers.

The former Republican state representative turned Libertarian says if smokers are bummed about the high price of cigarettes in Illinois — \$4 to \$5 a pack, with tax — they should blame his opponents.

This state raised the cigarette excise tax by 40 cents to 98 cents per pack last spring to help bolster its faltering bottom line — but not before U.S. Rep. Rod Blagojevich, a Chicago Democrat, called during his primary race for an increase in that tax to fund anti-smoking programs.

Previously, Attorney General Jim Ryan, the GOP candidate for governor, had joined other state attorneys general in suing the major tobacco companies to recoup smoking-related costs. The industry settled for \$246 billion in 1998. So, Skinner maintains, smokers should hold Ryan responsible for subsequent increases in the price of cigarettes.

"Why would any cigarette smoker vote for either one of these guys?" asks Skinner, who wants to reduce the tax.

He's also banking on gun owners (he would permit people to carry concealed weapons), Chicago-area motorists tired of paying tolls (he would abolish the tollway system) and highway motorists feeling confined by 55 mph or 65 mph speed limits (he would raise those limits by 10 mph).



Cal Skinner

But Skinner and James Tobin, a tax critic from Berwyn and Skinner's running mate, make a long shot team in this race. They don't have the money or the media attention commanded by the Republican or Democrat. At the end of June, Skinner's campaign had roughly \$6,400 in the bank. Blagojevich had \$3.8 million and Ryan had \$689,809.

The Libertarians did, however, win their fight to stay on the ballot. The Illinois Republican Party, whose candidates could lose conservative Republican votes to the Libertarians, in July dropped its challenge to that party's nominating petitions. The GOP challenged the Libertarians' nominating petitions four years ago and succeeded in knocking them off the ballot. This year, the Libertarians appeared to have more than enough valid signatures.

That party will need a 5 percent approval rating in any independent poll to be included in any debates this fall. To get the Libertarians on the ballot in 2004 as an established party, Skinner would need to get 5 percent of the votes cast for governor in November. A *Chicago Tribune* poll conducted last August showed Skinner had 4 percent support among those surveyed.

Skinner, who lives in Crystal Lake, spent 16 years in the Illinois House, where he developed a reputation as a sometimes-abrasive conservative. He focused much of his attention on professionalizing the property tax system.

Marisellis Brown of Danville, who could not be reached for comment, is running as an Independent. *Aaron Chambers*

the usually reserved House Speaker Madigan, chairman of the Illinois Democratic Party, took to the stage to pump a broom over his head, a symbol of sweeping the other party out of office.

In contrast, the GOP's gathering on the director's lawn resembled a support group meeting as much as a political rally. Two former GOP governors used their time on stage to help Republicans feel better about their chance at victory.

Edgar told the crowd not to be discouraged by poll numbers. He said that historically in Illinois, one gubernatorial candidate has a "big lead" going into the fall, but that lead diminishes by November. "No matter what the polls may say right now, come November, this is gonna be a tight election and it's gonna be decided by a few thousand votes."

He encouraged supporters to help GOP campaigns by rousing friends and neighbors. "Television commercials are nice, newspaper stories are good, but personal endorsements are still the most important thing in Illinois politics."

he said.

And former Gov. Jim Thompson urged Republicans to look beyond scandal: "We all need to pull together between now and Election Day. We all need to look past the controversy and cynicism and suspicion and focus on the positive message of our candidates and our party."

In a strange move, he apologized for Jim Ryan's serious disposition. "Sometimes people say to me, 'That Jim Ryan, he's not very exciting, is he?' I say I don't know whether he is or isn't. He's not me; he doesn't jump onto people's porches and grab beers out of their refrigerators and run from one end of the parade to the other and do silly things from time to time. But I'll tell you what's exciting," Thompson said, striking a solemn tone. "His ideas are exciting."

But then, Blagojevich isn't especially funny either. When introducing Democrat Daniel Hynes, state comptroller and one of youngest constitutional officers in state history, Blagojevich said he's "a young man, just got out of high school a couple years ago." About Dart, the

Democrat running for treasurer and Blagojevich's former Springfield roommate, he said: "He didn't do the dishes; he never made his bed."

Still, while Blagojevich careened around the fairgrounds, shaking hands and kissing babies before television cameras, Ryan's sense of humor was the subject of a former governor's pep talk.

Ryan makes no excuses for being a serious character, though. He told Sports Radio 1450, the Springfield station, that Edgar's similarly sober personality didn't prevent him from being successful as chief executive. He added that as attorney general, he deals with "serious" issues such as murder and fraud. "And to be smiling about these issues doesn't make a lot of sense."

Then he concluded, without so much as cracking a grin, "I've raised six kids. I think I have a good sense of humor. Don't you think I'm a funny guy?"

At that, Sam Madonia, the radio show's host, grabbed his chest and nearly fell from his seat. □

The intellectual and the activist

Carl Hawkinson and Pat Quinn each bring a wealth of experience to the lieutenant governor's race. And vastly different styles

by **Adriana Colindres**

Carl Hawkinson and Pat Quinn, the major party candidates for lieutenant governor, have at least two things in common: They're lawyers, and they've spent years working on matters of public interest.

Aside from that, Hawkinson, a long-time Republican state senator from Galesburg, and Quinn, a Chicago Democrat and former state treasurer, bring vastly different styles to their respective tickets.

On the Web

For information on the lieutenant governor candidates:

www.votequinn.com

www.jimryanforgovernor.com

www.skinner4governor.org

"I think I'm probably more deliberate and reserved," says Hawkinson, a Harvard Law School graduate. "As I've watched Mr. Quinn over the years, he's fond of the Sunday morning press conferences and the like, and I probably haven't been quite that aggressive in seeking out publicity."

Indeed, Quinn has conducted Sunday news conferences on multiple occasions over the years. While he was state treasurer, for instance, he used a couple

of Sundays to encourage Illinois banks to give low interest loans to veterans and to promote a proposal that would create a citizens lobby on tax matters. Because Sunday typically is a "slow" news day, such events generally attract greater media attention than they might on another day of the week.

Quinn, who notes that he has held news conferences on other days, says folks working with him on various efforts sometimes can't attend weekday news conferences. Sundays fit better into their schedules, he says. But the media-savvy Quinn also points out: "Sunday TV news at 10 o'clock is the most-watched news of the week."

While Quinn isn't the sort to shy away from the spotlight, he thinks it would be unfair to call him a publicity hound. "I know how to communicate with the public because I listen to the public."

Often described as a "maverick," he says he earned the label because of his history of taking positions that lacked the support of political insiders — Republicans and Democrats alike.

For instance, he led the effort that resulted in the 1980 "Cutback Amendment," a citizen-initiated change in the state constitution that reduced by one-third the size of the Illinois House of Representatives. Critics argue that change, which Quinn advocated as a way of saving money, has had the unintended consequence of consolidating power within the leadership of the legislature. A few years later, Quinn spearheaded a referendum that culminated in the creation of the Citizens Utility Board, a consumer group that keeps an eye on the Illinois utility industry.

He has organized, or helped, other grass-roots movements over the years, including one that would mandate, by state constitutional amendment, universal access to health care. Known as the "Bernardin Amendment," it's named after the late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago. "I like taking on causes that are tough to win and mean a lot to people," he says. "I'm not afraid to take on the powers that be."

Quinn, a former member of the Cook County Board of (Property Tax) Appeals, was elected Illinois state treasurer in 1990. He served a single four-year term, making an unsuccessful race



Carl Hawkinson



Pat Quinn

VS.

for secretary of state in 1994, when Republican incumbent George Ryan won a second term.

A graduate of Northwestern University Law School, Quinn works as a consumer lawyer in Chicago.

Carl Hawkinson, who was Knox County state's attorney from 1976 to 1982, has served in the Illinois General Assembly since 1983. After four years in the House, he moved to the state Senate in 1987. Since 1993, when Republicans took control of the Senate, Hawkinson has chaired that chamber's Judiciary Committee.

Over the years, he has gained a reputation as a studious, knowledgeable legislator who doesn't hesitate to raise questions if he thinks the language in a bill isn't clear or strong enough. In 1990, *Chicago* magazine cited him as one of Springfield's 10 best legislators and called him "a lobbyist's nightmare" because he is so well-versed on legislation.

His legislative record includes chief Senate sponsorship of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 1998. Reforms in that sweeping act include a statewide database of juvenile offenders, an increase in the time juveniles can be held in custody and a provision authorizing prosecutors to seek a dual sentence in which the adult version is stayed if the juvenile abides by the conditions of the juvenile system. He also has pushed anti-stalking legislation and a measure that keeps genetic information private and out of the hands of insurance companies.

Hawkinson ran for the Illinois

Supreme Court in 2000, winning the GOP nomination but losing in the general election to Democrat Thomas Kilbride of Rock Island.

Hawkinson and Quinn became their parties' lieutenant governor candidates by beating multiple opponents in the March partisan primary election. While candidates for lieutenant governor run independently from the gubernatorial hopefuls in the primary, each two-person team runs as a single unit for the November general election. Hawkinson is paired with GOP gubernatorial nominee Jim Ryan, while Quinn is coupled with Democratic nominee Rod Blagojevich.

The only other candidate who has filed to run for lieutenant governor in November is James Tobin, a Berwyn resident. He is on the Libertarian Party ticket with that party's candidate for governor, former state Rep. Cal Skinner of Crystal Lake.

Clearly, Hawkinson and Quinn agree, the focus of the 2002 campaign is on the candidates for governor, not their running mates. Even so, each man says he can attract some extra votes to his party's ticket. Each says he could be an effective governor if either Ryan or Blagojevich were unable to complete a term as chief executive.

And each has formed some ideas about how he'd perform the job of lieutenant governor.

Hawkinson says he would work with the Illinois River Coordinating Council and the Rural Affairs Council, duties handled by past lieutenant governors. But that isn't all.

"Before I accepted the invitation

of Jim Ryan to run [as his preferred running mate], he made it clear to me that he has a much bigger role in mind for me, that I would have a seat at the table in terms of policy initiatives and budget discussions and all the major decisions," says Hawkinson. "I would be listened to, and I know he respects my views based on my experience in state government."

Pat Quinn says if elected lieutenant governor, he would serve as an ombudsman — an advocate for consumers, taxpayers and "working people."

If the Democrats win, Quinn intends

to work with Blagojevich on getting strong ethics laws passed. The next governor and lieutenant governor also must work to "get the Illinois economy moving again," he says, adding that involves raising the state minimum wage to \$6.50 an hour, from \$5.15, then linking future increases to the cost of living. The state also must invest more heavily in such education-related areas as teacher training and recruitment, Quinn says.

Hawkinson says a key issue in the campaign is "geographic balance" because all of the Democrats running for state constitutional offices are from Cook County.

"I think I would bring to the office of lieutenant governor a perspective and an advocacy for the people in the other 96 counties — outside the collar counties and Cook," Hawkinson says. "I would be an advocate for agriculture and fair funding for downstate schools and fair funding for downstate roads."

Quinn says, in essence, the regionalism issue is baloney.

"It's not where you live," says Quinn, who notes that he has resided in Edwardsville and Springfield. "It's where you stand, what you've done." □

Adriana Colindres is a Statehouse reporter for Copley Illinois Newspapers.

The prosecutor and the advocate

Philosophical differences over the job description separate the major party candidates for Illinois attorney general

by Kevin McDermott

Joe Birkett's path toward a career in law began outside a Chicago fast-food restaurant in 1965, when, at age 10, he watched a gang member punch his mother in the face.

"The guy was arrested. I was interviewed. He was convicted. We saw justice done," recalls Birkett, who is now DuPage County state's attorney.

"That's when my interest first started in the justice system."

For Lisa Madigan, it started in the 1980s while she was doing volunteer social work in the streets of South Africa and, later, leading a "community policing" program in Chicago's blighted Austin neighborhood.

"In South Africa [during apartheid], 90 percent of the people were disenfranchised. In Austin, there were 70 percent [high school] dropout rates," says Madigan, now an attorney and a state senator from Chicago. "You work in a

couple of these communities and you realize you can use the law to advocate for people who don't have a voice."

Madigan, a Democrat, and Birkett, a Republican, will face each other November 5 in the race for Illinois attorney general. With two very different backgrounds and philosophies, their contest has become a referendum on what the state's top attorney should be: a law-and-order crime fighter or a civil reform advocate.

Birkett, a career prosecutor, is touting his 21 years of crime-fighting experience

in the courtroom, the last six as chief prosecutor for the state's second-largest county.

"There is wide disparity between us in qualifications. I'm running against someone who's never tried a case," says Birkett, hammering at the central theme of his campaign. "Because she doesn't have a [prosecutorial] record, she makes the office sound like it's a glorified social service office. It's not."

Madigan specialized in employment law as a private attorney, and as a state senator has focused on such issues as consumer fraud and domestic violence. Like most private attorneys, she has never tried a criminal case, but has routinely represented clients in state and federal civil courts, and before the Illinois departments of Labor and Human Rights and other governmental boards.

"Less than 10 percent of the attorney general's job is criminal prosecution."

On the Web

For information on the attorney general candidates:

www.lisamadigan.org

www.joebirkett.com

www.il.lp.org

says Madigan. She maintains that her civil law and social work background is more relevant than prosecutorial experience in an office where major duties include spearheading public awareness campaigns, advocating for new laws and representing the state in court.

"It's advocacy work. You use the bully pulpit to call attention to issues."

Her opponent grew up on Chicago's West Side in a family of 10 children. Birkett received his law degree from John Marshall Law School in 1981, and that year began work as an assistant state's attorney in DuPage County. He was appointed state's attorney in 1996 to complete the unexpired term of Jim Ryan, who had left to become Illinois attorney general. Birkett was elected to the post later that year, and re-elected in 2000.

Birkett calls corruption "the most important issue in this race," and says his initiatives as attorney general would include establishing anti-corruption "hotlines" throughout state government to allow workers to report questionable activities. He says he would focus on "Illinois' abysmal record" on collecting child support. He has proposed a new push against the proliferation of methamphetamines, including mandatory prison time for people caught transporting the raw materials used to make the drug.

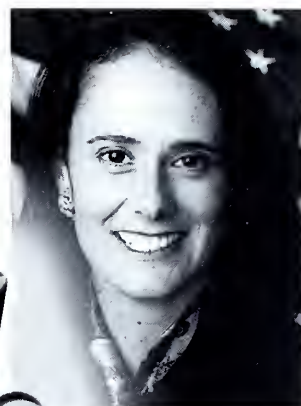
Madigan graduated from Georgetown University in 1988 and worked in the Washington, D.C., office of then-U.S. Sen. Paul Simon. She spent a year in South Africa as a volunteer high school teacher for black female students. Back in Chicago, she worked with the Chicago Police Department to develop youth programs. She earned her law degree at Loyola University in 1994, worked as a litigator for the Chicago law firm Sachnoff & Weaver, and was elected to Chicago's 17th District Senate seat in 1998.

Madigan says consumer fraud issues — particularly telemarketing fraud and scams against the elderly — would be central to her office as attorney general. She would establish a "Bureau of Privacy Protection" within the attorney general's office to fight identity theft and related crimes. She says she also would



Joe Birkett

VS.



Lisa Madigan

advocate new approaches to fighting juvenile crime, with an emphasis on crime prevention through youth programs and activities.

Both candidates propose policy initiatives to address the campaign's issue du jour — political corruption — while both are trying to stay out from under the shadows of their respective party higher-ups who have image problems along those lines.

Though neither Madigan nor Birkett has been the direct focus of scandal, corruption has been a frontline issue of the campaign battle.

Birkett — like most members of the Illinois GOP slate this year — stresses his distance from his party's unpopular, scandal-plagued governor, George Ryan.

Birkett's campaign material showcases corruption convictions he has won against fellow Republicans, including some of the first convictions connected to the ongoing federal investigation into bribery among Ryan's former secretary of state's employees.

Madigan stresses her independence from her father, Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, who also serves as state Democratic Party chairman. He has recently come under scrutiny for questions about whether his office used state employees for campaign work, and for his role in inserting \$300,000 into the new state budget for a horse show run by an old college friend. Lisa Madigan, pressed by reporters in August, said the allegations should be investigated.

Michael Madigan last year gave 25 legislative staffers \$97,000 worth of

bonuses shortly before they left their state jobs to work on the campaigns of other Democrats — including his daughter — raising the question of whether state funds were improperly used for political purposes. Birkett called on Lisa Madigan to reimburse the state for more than \$49,000 he says was improperly spent on her campaign.

Madigan's camp says Birkett is tied to the "culture of corruption" running GOP state politics, centered in DuPage County. House Republican Leader Lee Daniels' office, a case in point, is under scrutiny for allegedly mixing state and campaign work, and Lisa Madigan's supporters point out that Daniels' chief of staff during the questionable activities, Mike Tristano, had been an adviser to the Birkett campaign. Birkett's camp says it no longer has any ties to Tristano.

"We are so far behind in having structures in place to deal with ethics in public offices," says Madigan. "In large part, [the corruption issue] is identified with Republicans [because] we have not had leadership in rooting out corruption" under current Republican rule.

Counters Birkett: "Corruption is a problem for all the people. It's not a Democratic or a Republican problem. The climate of sleaze is the fault of a very few people."

Birkett and Madigan both say they would set up a special division within the attorney general's office to deal specifically with governmental corruption.

A familiar theme is central in Birkett's campaign. His opponent, he notes, "has no prosecutorial back-

ground. That's something we're really going to focus on."

It's the same strategy used earlier this year by Madigan's Democratic primary opponent, former U.S. Justice Department official John Schmidt. In fact, one of Birkett's standard lines — "The office of attorney general is no place for on-the-job training" — is one Schmidt used throughout the campaign.

Madigan went on to beat Schmidt by more than 15 percent of the vote.

"I'm not John Schmidt," says Birkett, who noted he won every county in his own GOP primary against better-funded opponent Robert Coleman. "But I respect John Schmidt. I think he should have won that race. The speaker's muscle was too formidable."

Birkett and others say the speaker is the reason Lisa Madigan was able to secure key labor and law enforcement endorsements and raise \$3.1 million in the first six months of this year. Birkett during that time raised \$1.4 million.

"If it wasn't for Michael Madigan, there'd be no contest. He's been a major influence" on political contributors and endorsements, says Birkett.

Lisa Madigan says, "I've gotten those endorsements because I've earned them." As for the influence of her father, she says: "I've been given opportunity. I've tried to use it to help people."

Experience and philosophy aside, there are more basic political and ideological differences between Birkett and Madigan, who share the ballot with Libertarian Gary Shilts, an attorney from Montgomery.

Madigan supports abortion rights, while Birkett opposes abortion except in cases of rape, incest or to protect the life of the mother. But Birkett says he would "defend the constitution" as currently interpreted by the courts, including the constitutional right to abortion.

Both Madigan and Birkett favor the death penalty, though they disagree on whether it's time to scuttle the state's moratorium on executions. Birkett says the moratorium should be lifted because state Supreme Court reforms have already addressed the problem of faulty death sentences in Illinois, while Madigan favors keeping the moratorium in place pending further public debate.

But, like abortion, that issue isn't

ultimately decided by the attorney general because only the courts and the governor have the power to postpone or commute death sentences.

As a result, the campaign likely will continue to focus on the candidates' opposing views about the fundamental role of the office they seek — and which of them has the right background to fill it.

"I've earned everything I've accomplished in life. I didn't wake up yesterday and say, 'I'm going to run for attorney general because there's an opening,'" says Birkett. "If you want to find out what kind of attorney general I'll be, look at what kind of state's attorney I've been."

"The attorney general is not the 103rd state's attorney," counters Madigan.

"I've spent my entire life working for people, from the street level to the Senate. I went to law school so I would have another tool to help people. As a lawyer, your job is to be an advocate for people." □

Kevin McDermott is an Illinois Statehouse-based reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Running to run the business of Illinois

Three statewide officials
face challenges to their tenures

THE BILL PAYER

*State comptroller candidates
have been protecting cemeteries
and planting trees*

by Daniel C. Vock

Rod Blagojevich, the Democrats' nominee for governor, loves to make light of Comptroller Dan Hynes'

age, telling partisan crowds he showed more foresight on the state budget than the governor or the legislative leaders, though he's barely out of high school.

But age won't be much of an issue in

On the Web

For information on the comptroller candidates:

www.friendsofdan.com

www.Vote4Ramsdell.com

www.il.lp.org

Hynes' re-election bid, considering that his opponent, Republican intellectual-property attorney Thomas Jefferson Ramsdell, is only 35, a little more than a year older than Hynes.

Hynes' financial planning, however, will be the subject of some debate.

The Chicagoan has long advocated the creation of a "Rainy Day Fund" so the state can amass emergency cash to help pay its creditors, including hospitals, pharmacies and social service agencies.

It's the comptroller's office that cuts

those checks for state agencies and decides who gets paid first when there's not enough money to go around. Hynes has used his position to try to goad lawmakers into setting money aside and taking other measures to please national credit rating agencies.

He finally got his Rainy Day Fund two years ago, a reserve made up in part of the state's proceeds from the national tobacco settlement. It was less than a quarter of the \$1 billion he proposed. Last year, he emptied it. The rainy day came quickly.

But his opponent Ramsdell objects to the idea of the fund in the first place, telling voters the state shouldn't be hoarding their money. If anyone should be saving taxpayer money, it should be taxpayers and not the government, he argues.

"The Rainy Day Fund is a fuzzy-sounding, poor political excuse for fiscal conservatism," says Ramsdell, who maintains he's a fiscal conservative and a social moderate.

Ramsdell handles patent cases and zoning disputes as a partner in the law firm of Marshall, Gerstein & Borun. He proudly points to his family's long line of public service, tracing back to such ancestors as Edwin Stanton, Abraham Lincoln's secretary of war, and Cornell University founder Ezra Cornell.

In his spare time, the Wilmette Republican has been traveling across the state, planting white oak trees — the official state tree — to remind voters that he's putting down new roots and growing fresh ideas. His goal is to plant one in each of the state's 102 counties.

Of course, planting trees is not one of the comptroller's official responsibilities. But Ramsdell says he's doing it because the white oak stands for strength, wisdom, prosperity and peace, a reminder of what Illinois can be under the right leadership.

Meanwhile, Hynes has been getting his hands dirty, too. He's been promoting efforts to clean up cemeteries from Jo Daviess County in the northwest corner of the state to Hardin County across the border



Daniel Hynes



Thomas Jefferson Ramsdell

from Kentucky.

During his three years in office, Hynes has played up the comptroller's role in regulating cemeteries and funeral homes. His office, he says, has applied more scrutiny to license applications for facilities, increased collection of outstanding fees and penalties and successfully backed an overhaul of consumer protection laws regarding burial contracts.

"It is one of those issues in the comptroller's office that strikes an emotional chord with people," Hynes says. "You're not talking about dollars, you're not talking about budgets, you're talking about human compassion."

Hynes stresses the transformation he says the office has undergone since he took over. While as comptroller he has authority to examine expenses to make sure they're not duplicative or fraudulent, he can't refuse to pay bills. Still, during the spring legislative session, Hynes held up payments for lawmakers' special projects, an attempt to pressure legislators to reconsider spending on those initiatives in light of state budget difficulties.

"We've changed the office from a bureaucracy to a bully pulpit, from a bill payer to a policymaker. [We've] really broadened the scope of the office and used its prominence to change fiscal policy."

Ramsdell has some thoughts along those lines, too. He envisions an office that makes better use of technology to help speed payment of bills. He credits

Hynes' predecessor, Republican Loleta Didrickson, for paving the way.

But Ramsdell admits his own campaign could benefit from technological improvements. A variety of problems held up deployment of his campaign Web site, which Ramsdell says showcases cutting edge features.

And while he claims he can do more with less than Hynes, Ramsdell says his campaign could use additional funds. The challenger had only \$4,000 on hand at the end of June — the last period for which information is available — compared to nearly \$1.7 million for Hynes.

Hynes has other advantages. The son of Thomas Hynes, a former Illinois Senate president and Cook County assessor, he weighed whether to run for re-election or shoot for higher office. He chose to make a bid for another four years as comptroller, but his name has been mentioned as a possible candidate for the U.S. Senate in 2004.

Libertarians have fielded a candidate in this race, too: Julie Fox of West Dundee. She's a certified public accountant and controller for the U.S. operations of a chemical company.

Both of the major party candidates graduated near the top of their law school classes, and voters will likely decide whether Hynes or Ramsdell could best lecture lawmakers on their math. □

Daniel C. Vock is the Statehouse bureau chief for the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin.

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Secretary of state candidates seek to uphold or to overturn history

by Adriana Colindres

A campaign victory next month would make Democrat Jesse White the fourth consecutive secretary of state to be elected to two terms. So it would be no small coup if his Republican opponent Kris O'Rourke Cohn breaks that trend of repeats.

There's plenty of incentive to hang onto the secretary of state's spacious digs in the Capitol — or get a foot in the door. That the last two governors used the office as a springboard to the Executive Mansion is hardly coincidental. The expansive domain of the secretary of state includes driver services and the state library. Both responsibilities offer numerous opportunities for conspicuous display of the incumbent's name. Every time an Illinoisan hands over a license for identification, that name is flashed. Noble causes, such as literacy, organ donation and safe driving, put the secretary of state's face on display in countless public service ads.

And then, given the number of jobs that official controls — second only to the governor — the post has been considered a party plum.

Of late, it also has been the subject of considerable bad press, particularly for White's predecessor, Republican Gov. George Ryan, some of whose employees, overly concerned by the political nature of their jobs, perhaps, turned to trading commercial trucking licenses for campaign cash.

White says he has restored some integrity to an office blemished by the corruption that occurred largely on Ryan's watch. He brought in former federal prosecutor Jim Burns as inspector general and banned employees from soliciting campaign contributions — though he does accept workers' voluntary contributions.

But White has faced controversies



Jesse White

VS.



Kris O'Rourke Cohn

of his own over the past three years. He introduced a former secretary to lawmakers, encouraging them to award her charity \$175,000 in state grants. The Illinois attorney general later found no evidence the charity had done any work and has sued for repayment. Meanwhile, White fired and then rehired his attorney Donna Leonard, a situation that he has likened to a family squabble.

Still, Cohn has been passing out bars of soap on the campaign trail because, she says, it's time to "clean up" the secretary of state's office. Operations under the auspices of the secretary of state could be improved as well, says Cohn, who lives in Rockford and is on her second four-year term as Winnebago County Board chair.

Cohn, who maintains White is responsible for long customer waits for license plates and vehicle titles, says what is needed is "a proven administrator."

If elected, she says, she'll make changes so the office runs in a more efficient and customer-friendly manner. As an example, she's proposing a "blue license," one the secretary of state's office would issue to recent victims of identity theft. The idea is to enable them to prove quickly to

businesses, police and others that they are the injured party, rather than the criminal.

Cohn says she also plans to push for electronic vehicle registration, which would enable car dealers to issue registration and plates on the day consumers buy new vehicles.

But White says he has proven himself to be an able administrator and cites more than a half-dozen examples, including the distribution of new plates to Illinois motorists — some of whom hadn't received a new plate since 1984. In addition, White says, changes implemented by his office have curbed the abuse of temporary vehicle registration tags and placards intended to enable disabled people to park in designated spots.

If re-elected, White says he plans to "go full blast" on further initiatives, such as convincing the General Assembly to fork over enough money for 100 kiosks in Illinois shopping malls. Citizens, he says, could use the kiosks to perform such tasks as buying renewal stickers or signing up to be an organ donor. He estimates the kiosks would result in 2 million fewer transactions at driver's license facilities, speeding services there.

White, a Chicagoan, was Cook County recorder of deeds for six years before being elected secretary of state in 1998. He served 16 years as a state representative and 33 years as a teacher and administrator in the Chicago public school system. Founder of the Jesse White Tumbling Team, which he created to offer recreational alternatives to inner-city

On the Web

For information on the secretary of state race:

www.jessewhite2002.com

www.cohn2002.com

www.15orfree.com

THE BANKER

*State treasurer candidates
get down and dirty for this
down-the-ballot post*

by Daniel C. Vock

There's plenty of incentive to hang onto the secretary of state's spacious digs in the Capitol — or get a foot in the door. That the last two governors used the office as a springboard to the Executive Mansion is hardly coincidental. The expansive domain of the secretary of state includes driver services and the state library.

kids, he's also a former paratrooper with the U.S. Army and an ex-baseball player in the Chicago Cubs organization.

As Winnebago County board chair, Cohn oversees 1,800 employees and a \$117 million budget and has focused on neighborhood cleanup and redevelopment. A former Winnebago County clerk and Rockford Park District commissioner, she also has served as director of school and community relations for the Rockford public school district.

Cohn acknowledges that incumbency generally is an advantage during a political campaign. But she adds, "If you're an incumbent, you better darned well have done the job."

If White wins next month, he would uphold a trend. The three previous secretaries of state who won second terms were, in chronological order, Democrat Alan Dixon and Republicans Jim Edgar and George Ryan.

Also running for secretary of state in the November general election is Libertarian candidate Matt Beauchamp, a former Chicago Mercantile Exchange trader and frequent congressional candidate, whose Web site boasts, "You're going to get your driver's license in 15 minutes or it's free!" □

Adriana Colindres is a Statehouse reporter for Copley Illinois Newspapers.

Tom Dart, a Democratic state representative from Chicago, frames his bid for treasurer around a need to sweep Republicans from state government. He and his opponent, incumbent Judy Baar Topinka, may differ on politics and policy, but similarities in personality and experience makes this one of the most tightly matched contests on the November ticket.

Both are affable yet ambitious, easy-going yet energetic. Both can point to lengthy state legislative credentials. Each has served in the House and the Senate. Each considered running for a more prominent post — Topinka for secretary of state, Dart for attorney general — before choosing the treasurer's race.

Topinka, who has nurtured a reputation as outspoken and eccentric, broke a 32-year Democratic hold on the treasurer's office, taking control of the state's finances after serving in the Senate 12 years and the House four.

On the stump, the red-headed Riverside native can breeze through accomplishments without pause. She notes the office provides low-interest loans to deployed military personnel and home buyers with credit problems. She highlights the Cash Dash program, which has returned \$117 million in unclaimed property. And she points to 59,000 families who have enrolled in the Bright Start college savings program, which collected more than \$340 million in investments in its first two years.

"I treat that money like my own, and everybody knows I'm cheaper than the dickens. So, it is the perfect job for me," she told supporters at this summer's State Fair.

In fact, she began as a reporter and editor for a suburban newspaper chain, earning a graduate degree in journalism from Northwestern University in 1966. She tried her hand at public relations before entering politics.

Topinka won her first term as treasurer in what was a phenomenal year for Republicans. In 1994, voters, dissatisfied with Democratic President Bill Clinton, swept the GOP into control of both chambers of Congress. In Illinois, they kept Jim Edgar as governor, gave his party the edge in the state House, as well as the Senate, and elected the entire Republican slate, including Topinka, to statewide office. She was re-elected in 1998.

Early that first term, though, Topinka raised eyebrows by proposing to settle outstanding state loans to politically connected investors in Springfield's Renaissance hotel on terms critics considered too generous. Attorney General Jim Ryan, a fellow Republican, blocked the settlement, declaring it was not in the best interests of the state.

After that very public setback, Topinka's tenure in what is perhaps the quietest statewide office has been controversy free.

Nevertheless, the Democrats, energized by the scent of scandal elsewhere in the Republican Party, hope it's their turn to win it all, including this low-profile post. A general anti-Republican climate this year could mean the difference for lesser-known candidates like Dart.

And Dart, who is running an aggressive campaign, hasn't hesitated to play the ethics card in an effort to turn the hearts of voters against Topinka. He has singled her out for a deal she made with Salomon Smith Barney to run Bright Start. Dart argues she chose the company over others with better-performing mutual funds because it gave her control over \$24 million to promote the program. She's used the money for TV ads and trinkets that, Dart alleges, do more to raise her political profile than public interest in college savings accounts.

Topinka spokesman John McGovern calls the allegations "tired and frivolous."



Judy Baar Topinka

VS.



Tom Dart

The real reason Topinka chose Salomon Smith, he says, was because it offered participants far more funds to invest in than any of the alternatives, giving the participants more flexibility to protect their returns. Besides, he adds, the other two top contenders offered more marketing dollars than the plan Topinka chose.

Dart also questions why campaign contributions from Topinka's employees have doubled in the seven years since she was sworn in, noting that even embattled Gov. George Ryan stopped accepting contributions from his employees. McGovern responds that the treasurer does not actively solicit funds from her employees, but that they are free to give to her campaign.

And Dart attacked Topinka for not immediately embracing short-term borrowing — which she eventually agreed to — as a way to help the state pay its bills more quickly during this current budget crunch. Topinka says the state has been spending money “like a drunken sailor.” During last spring's legislative session, she urged lawmakers to pass a responsible budget before agreeing to the loans.

Dart criticizes Topinka for increasing her own office's expenses by more than twice the rate of inflation. McGovern responds by arguing that Dart has had money problems of his own, initially failing to disclose a \$200,000 loan his father made to his campaign — a large oversight, McGovern claims, considering Dart's campaign had little more than \$500,000 on hand at the end of June.

Topinka, by comparison, had more than \$900,000.

It's been a down-and-dirty campaign, it seems, between the major party candidates for this race. Meanwhile, Libertarian treasurer candidate Rhys Read of Des Plaines hasn't been heard above the fray.

Dart is only 40 years old, but he's closing in on a decade of experience as a lawmaker in the Illinois House. Before he was elected to that chamber in 1992, he was appointed to the state Senate for an eight-month stint to fill an unexpired term. Prior to that, Dart worked on the House and Senate staffs.

In his current post as chairman of the House Judiciary Committee on Civil Law, he has been a champion of many measures favored by trial lawyers. He advocated “social host liability” for people who serve alcohol to guests who later kill someone in drunk driving accidents. He championed re-enacting the so-called “Scaffold Act,” which gave construction workers more rights to sue for on-the-job injuries before Republicans repealed it in 1995. The GOP and business groups claim the law opened

Both are affable yet ambitious, easy-going yet energetic. Both can point to lengthy state legislative credentials. Each has served in the House and the Senate. Each considered running for a more prominent office — Topinka for secretary of state, Dart for attorney general — before choosing the treasurer's race.

them to unreasonable awards and court costs. Both of those measures have stalled.

But Dart, a former prosecutor, spearheaded successful efforts to reform the juvenile justice system, giving prosecutors and judges more options in dealing with youth offenders; to enact the Safe Neighborhoods Act, which among other things, cracks down on gun-running and illegally buying guns for other people; and to amend the Illinois Constitution to allow child witnesses to testify in court via closed-circuit TV.

Now he wants to add a statewide position to his list of accomplishments. But he'll have to get past an equally energetic incumbent. □

Daniel C. Vock is the Statehouse bureau chief for the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin.

On the Web

For information on the treasurer candidates:

www.judybaartopinka.com

www.tomdart.com

www.readfortreasurer.org

Who's laughing now?

Illinois voters have always tolerated a little petty larceny, so long as pols don't break certain cardinal rules

Analysis by Robert Davis
Illustration by Diana L.C. Nelson

If official corruption in Illinois is no laughing matter, why are there so many jokes about it? Professional comedians, average citizens, even respectable politicians from the president on down can rely on comments about cemetery voters in Chicago as a sure punch line.

Downstaters still recall with benign nostalgia the old-time state legislator who, during debate on some obvious special interest legislation, crowed to his fellow lawmakers, "I smell the meat a'cookin'," not with shame but with pride in the public pronouncement of potential bribery.

And in Chicago, a longtime political reporter who eventually went on to become a behind-the-scenes politician himself, used to loudly exclaim, "You can't hang around City Hall for any length of time without getting hit with a little falling graft."

And everybody laughed.

In politics, though, the laughter stops at election time, when everybody turns into that police inspector from the movie *Casablanca*, who says he is "shocked, shocked" that gambling is going on at Rick's gin joint, though he has been getting payoffs regularly.

So it is, once again, in Illinois, where — though the state budget is a major economic disaster and programs are getting carved up with a meat cleaver — the biggest issue seems to be political corruption. And this time it doesn't even involve a candidate, but

Gov. George Ryan — the most recent in a long series of Republican chief executives — who isn't running for re-election. Both of the major party gubernatorial candidates, Attorney General Jim Ryan, the Republican, and U. S. Rep. Rod Blagojevich, the Democrat, have been using George Ryan for target practice, though he has not been personally charged with wrongdoing. They're "shocked, shocked" about allegations of official misbehavior under his watch. In fact, they really aren't saying George Ryan was a bad governor. They're mostly saying he was a bad secretary of state before he became governor.

The question now is what the voters are going to do about it.

As is often the case, history may be

the best teacher. And Illinois' political past offers at least three lessons: A politician is more often judged by what he or she has done than by what he or she promises to do; a little petty larceny will be tolerated, but not when it begins to dominate the discussion; and politicians can get away with most anything, so long as they don't reach into voters' pockets or hurt anyone.

Richard Ogilvie's career is a case in point. Before his successful bid for governor in the late 1960s, the former Republican Cook County sheriff was dogged by news reports and opponents' charges that he had cozied up to crime syndicate figures while he was that county's top law enforcement official. He had named Richard Cain, a shadowy character, as his top investigator. Ogilvie eventually fired Cain after the aide was charged with running a burglary ring and hanging out with then-top Mafioso Sam Giancana, serving as the mob boss' personal driver in Mexico. Dubbed the "Mark of Cain," the story was dredged up again during Ogilvie's gubernatorial re-election bid. But that isn't what denied him a second term in the 1972 contest. Instead, voters were outraged that Ogilvie, in cahoots with Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, had pushed through the first state income tax.

In Ogilvie's case, the corruption issue wasn't the killer; the pocketbook issue was.

Four years later, Illinoisans were



treated to a more typical scenario: The past sneaked up and bit a sure-thing candidate.

Dan Walker, who ousted Ogilvie and was the last Democrat to hold the governor's office, was a populist, but not popular, so it was easy for the affable Michael Howlett, the acknowledged king of the rubber chicken circuit, to bump off Walker in the 1976 primary. During that campaign, Walker raised an issue that eventually became the nagging subtext of the entire election year. Howlett, a former state auditor of public accounts and secretary of state, had held a \$15,000-a-year vice presidency of the controversial Sun Steel Co. of Chicago while, in his official government capacity, he was overseeing the company's sometimes dubious business with the state.

Though Howlett won the primary, the allegations trailed him into the general election. It didn't help the usually ebullient Howlett that his Republican opponent was James Thompson, who had forged a reputation as a corruption-busting U. S. attorney. During his Justice Department duties, Thompson had sent off to jail such luminaries as Daley's close ally, Ald. Thomas Keane, Cook County Clerk Edward Barrett, several other aldermen, more than 50 bad Chicago cops and Daley's own press secretary.

While Thompson moved about the state pointing to recent headlines on his proven good government credentials, Howlett remained handcuffed by allegations. At one memorable news conference Howlett held to talk about one of his campaign issues, he was bombarded with the same old questions about his steel company ties and fled the room, chased by reporters, shouting, "I'm not talking about Sun Steel." The "corruption issue" had become the "only issue."

Thompson, of course, won the election, beginning a quarter century of Republican gubernatorial control, and Howlett retired from the political arena.

But paying for retro-sins has hardly been an aberration in Illinois politics.

The jewel in Thompson's Anti-Corruption Crown was former Illinois

Gov. Otto Kerner, who had risen to national prominence by chairing President Lyndon Johnson's civil rights committee, which issued a warning about the development of two American societies, one black and one white. A patrician by nature, Kerner had been rewarded with a U.S. Court of Appeals judgeship and seemed destined to enter state history as one of those rare politicians who had escaped with his reputation intact. But his days as governor in the "meat a'cookin'" atmosphere of Springfield came back to haunt him. His top aide, Theodore Isaacs, had been cutting backroom deals with leaders of the state's horse racing industry, giving them prime racing dates in exchange for company stock, and, being a loyal, if unethical, Kerner insider, he cut the governor in on those deals.

Thompson, with the reluctant permission of President Richard Nixon's administration, secured the indictment and conviction of Kerner, who was sent to prison. Proud and pompous, Kerner had taken the stand in his own defense, but his haughty manner turned off the jurors, and, to this day, many feel it was Kerner's hubris, rather than his hijinks, that sent him to prison.

Now it's 2002, and history is back, knocking on the door. There's a sitting governor who just might effectively end the state's capital punishment system, who became the first American governor to visit Fidel Castro's Cuba, who worked closely and effectively with Democratic Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley and seemed to be forging a kind of bipartisan peace with Democratic legislative leaders.

But all the things Ryan has done as governor seem to have been obscured by all the things he had done earlier as secretary of state. More poignant: It wasn't the proverbial "falling graft" that hit Ryan. It was a piece of falling metal that dropped off a truck in Wisconsin on November 8, 1994, causing a hideous accident that killed six children in a fiery blaze. The investigation revealed that the truck driver, Ricardo Guzman, had paid a bribe to

get his license — a fact that really didn't have much to do with a faulty truck part, but which ignited the fury of the media and the general public. And Guzman wasn't a unique case. The so-called "licenses-for-bribes" scandal was born, and over the next few years, the indictments continued, starting with a handful of driver's license examiners and eventually moving right up into the governor's political inner circle.

As history notes, Illinois voters can accept some apparent misconduct good-naturedly. Former Gov. William Stratton, the "boy wonder" of the late 1950s, was indicted after leaving office for campaign fund irregularities, for instance, but he beat the rap and eventually became the "grand old man" of the Republican Party. But George Ryan, and his political allies, broke a cardinal rule of "honest graft" and "business-as-usual" politics. Simply put, it is this: You can take a little for yourself, but don't take any of mine and don't hurt anyone. Ogilvie learned that lesson the hard way after he put into a trusted position a guy everybody seemed to know was a bit hinky. He carried the "Mark of Cain" throughout his career, but when he decided to tax the paychecks of the electorate, he was doomed.

Yet Ryan's political travails after that piece of metal fell off a truck represent something more. Culpable or not, he has come to symbolize the fear and resentment of every voter who has ever driven a carful of kids to a soccer game, worried they will fall victim to a driver who slipped a handful of 20s to a sticky-fingered payroller.

Illinois politics is rife with slogans born of the past, and a longtime favorite has been that of the late Mayor Richard J. Daley, who often said, "Good politics is good government." There is an obverse. "Bad politics is bad government," and Illinois voters decide every election year whether that adage holds true.

This is an election year, and once again the laughter has stopped. □

Robert Davis covered politics for the Chicago Tribune for more than 30 years and now teaches journalism at Columbia College Chicago.

LEAVING

Several state agency heads announced last month that they will be stepping down. Among them: **Michael Schwartz**, director of Central Management Services, whose early retirement took effect this month; and **Kirk Brown**, secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation, who is retiring at the end of the year.

CONVICTED

Betty Loren-Maltese, former Cicero town president, is guilty of racketeering and fraud in connection with the theft of more than \$12 million from the town.

She and six others were convicted in an insurance scam that diverted money meant to pay the doctor and hospital bills of town employees into such projects as a golf course, private homes and expensive cars.

Loren-Maltese became town president in 1993. Her late husband, Frank Maltese, then town assessor, had arranged for Specialty Risk Consultants to take over the town's health insurance business a few months earlier. Trial records indicate Cicero was its only client.

For the past three years, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the criminal investigation division of the Internal Revenue Service have been pursuing corruption in Cicero, the place Al Capone used as his base of operations in the 1920s.

SAVED

Carl Sandburg's papers come home

The University of Illinois was the high bidder at an auction of **Carl Sandburg's** papers.

Representing the university, rare book dealer J. Howard Woolmer spent \$16,775 on 140 items at the sale, which was held in Pennsylvania.

"We got a good percentage of our high priorities," says Gene Rinkel, curator of the U of I's Special Collections, which holds the most extensive Sandburg archive in the state.

Born in Galesburg in 1878, writer Carl Sandburg won two Pulitzer Prizes: the first in 1940 for a biography of Abraham Lincoln and the second in 1957 for his *Complete Poems of Carl Sandburg*. But he was best known for his poem *Chicago*.

He died at age 89 in 1967.

Among the documents in the collection was confirmation of Sandburg's role in espionage in 1918 and that he considered a presidential run in 1940 as a Republican against Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Rinkel says the new material, including the original manuscript of Sandburg's 1908 three-page essay *Plaint of the Rose*, supports the material already housed at the Urbana-Champaign campus. These pieces "fill in some of the gaps" in Sandburg's life, says Rinkel, and seem even more special because they were minutes from the garbage truck.

The boxes of papers had been collected by Sandburg's longtime Harcourt & Brace editor, Catherine "Kitty" McCarthy. They were passed down to the widow of her nephew, now an elderly woman living in Cape Cod. A local antiques dealer had dropped off a check for some china he had sold for her, and she asked him to carry the boxes to the curb for recycling. When he picked up one box, a string broke and he recognized the treasure she was about to throw away. He helped get the materials ready for the auction that brought more than \$80,000, which they split.

The state Historic Preservation Agency, which cares for Sandburg's birthplace in Galesburg, did not have funds available to bid on any of the items, says agency spokesman Dave Blanchette.



Carl Sandburg

QUOTABLES

“I’m opposed to capital punishment. But I’ve never said that before to anyone.”

Moses Harrison II in an interview with Copley News reporter Adriana Coliudres. The 70-year-old Harrison of Collinsville, who served as chief justice, retired last month after a decade on the Illinois Supreme Court. Harrison was outspoken on the state’s death penalty system, arguing it should be thrown out because it is flawed and would inevitably result in the execution of innocent people. Appellate Court Judge Philip Rarick of Fairview Heights is replacing Harrison on the bench. Justice Mary Ann McMorrow became the first woman chief justice.

“It will be ended in America — I don’t know whether Illinois will lead the way or not — but we’re the only civilized country in the world that has the death penalty. And we just have no reason to have it, frankly. And I would hope that someday it’s abolished.”

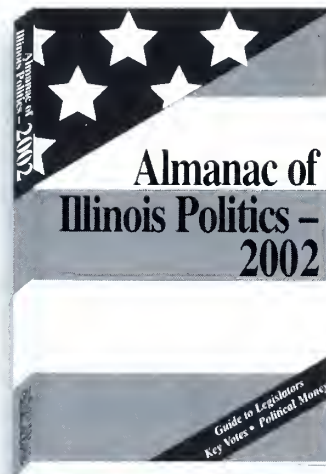
Gov. George Ryan in an interview with Maria Hickey and Jak Tichenor of WSIU public radio in Carbondale at the DuQuoin State Fair. Ryan placed a moratorium on Illinois executions two years ago after innocent people began walking off Death Row. His death penalty commission issued 85 recommendations for reforming the system, which the governor has called on lawmakers to consider. He’s also considering whether to offer clemency to some 159 Death Row inmates before he leaves office in January.

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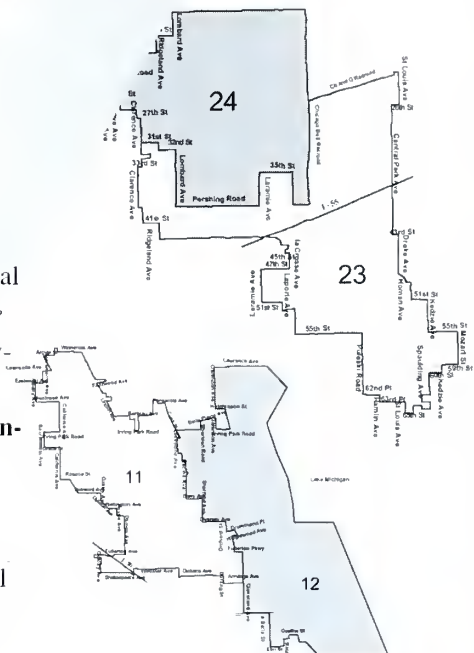
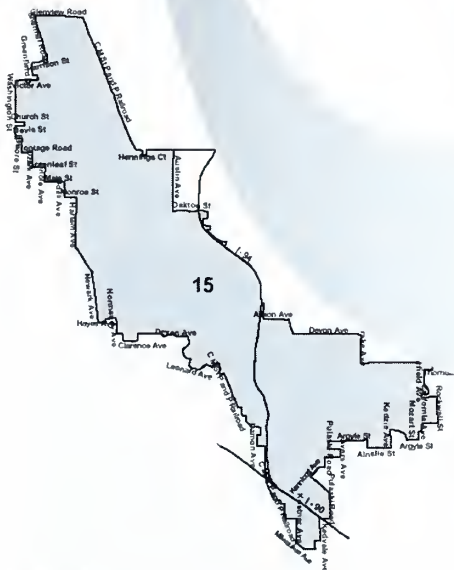
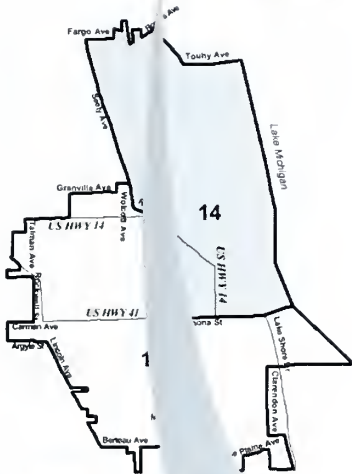
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LETTERS

New nuclear power plant could cost less

The article, "Back to the atom" (see *Illinois Issues*, July/August, page 14), was interesting and timely, but the idea that a nuclear plant is necessarily high-cost has to be tempered. When ComEd was actively constructing nuclear plants, interest rates were near an all-time high, and intervenors were plentiful and determined. What happens under these conditions when construction has to be delayed for faults that in the end may turn out to lack substantiation? Costs go sky high. We are paying for this now.

If a modern plant could be built to a standard design at today's interest rates, and intervention could be limited, costs could be much lower.

Three Mile Island was indeed our worst reactor accident, and yet what did we learn? The reactor melted down, no China syndrome, and the containment held. No person was injured. Of course,

the cleanup was expensive, but what else can one expect if a cleanup is done in the most time-consuming, expensive manner?

By the way, reactors are high-intensity producers. The sun is a low-intensity source. They serve different purposes and both should be utilized and developed. One does not replace the other, but both have an advantage over coal, gas or hydro power.

W.T. Carnall
Countryside

Write us

Your comments are welcome. Please keep them brief (250 words). We reserve the right to excerpt them.

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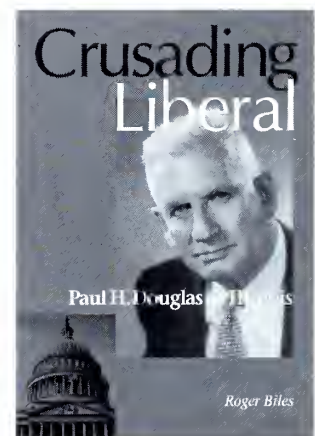
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Madeleine Doubek



No one would blame the legendary "Pate" if he hung it up. And plenty would cheer the end of that era

by **Madeleine Doubek**

Before Archie Bunker came along to croon with Edith and enlighten us on his whitebread, working-class ways, Illinoisans had James "Pate" Philip.

Pate, as he is known to any and all, was first elected in 1965 as the auditor of York Township in DuPage County. He quickly moved to the Illinois House in 1967, was elected to the Illinois Senate in 1974 and became that chamber's GOP leader in 1981. He has been DuPage's GOP chairman since 1970. Pate was elected Senate president nearly a decade ago, but many suspect it may soon be time to close the curtain on his long reign as a legislative leader.

Pate's Republicans aren't favored to retain a Senate majority in the November election as they run under a Democratic-drawn map, so no one would blame Pate if he hung it up after 36 years in public office. And plenty would cheer the end of that particular era.

Never a statesman, Pate was politically incorrect way before politically incorrect was cool. Consider just a few of his highest-rated episodes:

- At the press conference after he first won control of the Senate in November 1992, Pate told reporters he did not necessarily favor increased spending for bilingual education. "Let 'em learn English," he said.

- The following summer, a dispute arose over a proposed \$25-a-month increase in welfare grants for families. "To just give them another \$25 per family, [welfare recipients are] going to

go out and buy more lottery tickets is probably what they'll do."

- Later that year, he suggested former Democratic Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun was not prosecuted for a Medicaid financial problem involving her mother because she and then-Attorney General Roland Burris both were black.

- But easily the biggest uproar was caused by remarks Pate made during an endorsement interview with the *Daily Herald* in 1994. Pate brought up then-recent news about 19 children being found abandoned in filth at a Chicago address, noting the family was getting \$4,900 in aid a month and that the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services investigator and supervisor charged with tracking the family were minorities.

"It's probably a terrible thing to say, but I'll say it," said Pate. "Some of them do not have the work ethics that we have. Secondly, they don't tend to turn on or squeal on their fellow minorities. I don't know what you do about that, but it's kind of a way of life."

The media hounded him for days. Dogged by reporters himself, re-election candidate and then-Gov. Jim Edgar, in a bit of un-Pate-like understatement, shrugged: "There are some days I'd just as soon he wouldn't answer questions."

Dozens of bureaucrats, union officials and interest group leaders called for Pate's resignation, but he outlasted them all and stuck around to make Gov. George Ryan squirm as well.

Ryan and Pate famously clashed over a bill Ryan wanted that would make the illegal transportation of firearms a felony. For a time, Pate also irked Ryan and fellow DuPage legislative leader Rep. Lee Daniels by blocking Daniels' appointment as state Republican chairman. Ironically, Daniels and Ryan now are haunted by federal investigations into their offices' activities, but, so far, Pate has avoided similar scrutiny.

Pate's most popular episodes were not just about bigotry or personality clashes. Like Archie, Pate knew what he knew, said what he believed and fought for those beliefs.

He was instrumental in passing tax caps, which have held down suburban property taxes. He helped trim the creation of a super-sized state human services department. He stopped school tax swaps and an assault weapons ban. He blocked Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley's pursuit of a third airport in Lake Calumet.

Whenever Pate's mouth has gotten him into trouble, he has faulted the "liberal" media for misinterpreting him. But when the Pate show does go to reruns, it may be reporters who will miss him most liberally. With Pate, there never is any parsing of "is" or "was." What we heard was what he thought, a rare commodity in politics now — and three decades ago. Ah, Pate, those were the days. □

Madeleine Doubek is metro editor for politics & projects at the Daily Herald, a suburban metro newspaper.

Mike Morsch



Illinois lawmakers should have a backup plan if the St. Louis Cardinals don't move across the river

by Mike Morsch

I'm not sure anyone realistically thinks the St. Louis Cardinals will move across the river if Missouri lawmakers don't meet the team's demand for a new stadium. But that doesn't mean Illinois shouldn't have asked.

That's just what Carlyle Democrat Rep. Kurt Granberg did last year. And Gov. George Ryan hasn't let the idea get past him. Ryan met late in the summer with Cardinals president Mark Lamping to explore the possibilities of a Cardinals move.

One might surmise that Ryan and Granberg knew the Cubs and White Sox were going to stink in 2002 and were thinking Illinois ought to have at least one good baseball team within its borders. But even these politicians must realize the Cardinals' flirtation with Illinois is just a wink and a nod designed to make Missouri act like a jealous boyfriend.

In fact, the city of St. Louis in particular would like to eliminate the Illinois factor altogether. According to published reports, Mayor Francis Slay hasn't been coy about saying that he'd like the city to have a ballpark plan in front of the Cardinals before the Illinois legislature reconvenes in November.

If the Cardinals leave Illinois in the on-deck circle, then what happens? Metro East, and southern Illinois in general, could still use an economic and cultural boost. Peoria, Rockford,

Mayor Francis Slay hasn't been coy about saying that he'd like the city to have a ballpark plan in front of the Cardinals before the Illinois legislature reconvenes in November.

Schaumburg and Kane County are having some success with minor league baseball. But those areas have new stadiums and population bases to support them.

Maybe it's best that our friends south of Springfield are exposed to a different piece of the sports culture pie.

Like cricket.

It's a distant relative to baseball in that it is played with a ball and something resembling a bat, which looks more like a 1960s-era school principal's paddle. The game is predominantly played in what was once the old British Empire — India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Zimbabwe, the West Indies and, of course, England. Since none of these places is within spitting distance of

southern Illinois, one can assume that the region's coal miners and farmers have not yet been introduced to the sport, and that an untapped market exists.

The first thing the state needs to do to advance this proposal is hire my friend Reg, a noted newspaperman and the only guy I know who has any knowledge whatsoever of cricket. Reg is Australian and would probably accept the assignment, if for no other reason than that he has not visited southern Illinois and would be happy to do so if cocktails were somehow included in the deal.

According to Reg, the key to getting fans interested in cricket is the terminology, ever so important in baseball. For example, the cricket pitcher is called a "bowler" and the catcher is called a "wicketkeeper," although I have yet to hear a reasonable explanation as to why the wicketkeepers get to keep all the wickets. After all, the second baseman does not get to keep second base, does he?

Other cricket phrases include "caught in the slips," "out of his crease" and "out leg before wicket," all perfectly enjoyable sounding and no doubt easily workable in a marketing campaign. On the defensive side, some of the position players are called "cover," "extra cover" (presumably if it gets cold), "square leg," "silly mid on" and "silly mid off."

Whatever the odds of success, Illinois appears positioned to make the Cardinals an offer should the pols in the city of St. Louis and/or the state of Missouri strike out.

I assume, then, that the cricket equivalent to "Tinkers to Evers to Chance" would be "Square Leg to Silly Mid On to Silly Mid Off." That's going to need some work.

As we know, baseball is played with no clock and can drag on at times. One change we'd have to make in cricket, though, is the length of the contests. While games consist of only two innings, the scores can reach to 600 and one game can last up to five days.

Even with longer attention spans and cleared schedules, it's evident we are going to need better bowlers because nobody can give up 600 runs and expect to win a game.

Oh, and one last detail. There is a break in every cricket match around 3:45 p.m. for tea. One can't sing "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" while holding a cup of tea. Harry Caray certainly would never have put up with that. Leave it to the Brits to foul up the seventh-inning stretch.

Whatever the odds of success, Illinois appears positioned to make the Cardinals an offer should the pols in the city of St. Louis and/or the state of Missouri strike out. Illinois lawmakers should have a backup plan, though, and form an advisory committee to explore the feasibility of cricket.

Now if we can just figure out a way to work hunting rifles and fishing rods into cricket, then southern Illinois just might warm to the proposal. □

Mike Morsch can be reached at 217-206-6521 or by e-mail at morsch.michael@uis.edu.

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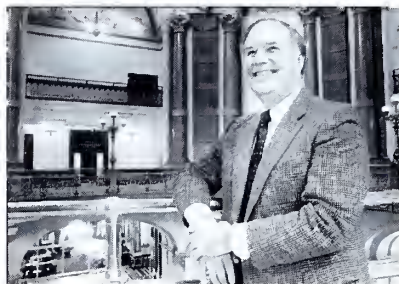
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Charles N. Wheeler III



Schools panel would trade higher state taxes for lower property taxes

by Charles N. Wheeler III

Do Illinoisans really want to change the way their public schools are financed?

As the 2002 campaign enters its final five weeks, that's the question raised by a state panel's recommendations for revamping education funding.

After a two-year study, the Education Funding Advisory Board proposed higher income and sales taxes to replace some of the local property taxes now going to schools and to provide more dollars for students in the state's poorest districts.

In a preliminary report, the board suggested:

- Replacing up to half of school property taxes — some \$4.5 billion — dollar-for-dollar with state funds.
- Increasing the guaranteed per-pupil funding level to between \$5,665 and \$6,680, up from this school year's \$4,560 guarantee.
- Providing extra funds to help educate children from low-income families and revising the way school districts count how many of those kids they have.
- Coming up with the money to pay for the proposals — which could cost as much as \$6.3 billion — by raising income tax rates, closing tax loopholes, expanding the sales tax base and collecting more from the gambling industry.

The board also recommended incentives to encourage smaller school districts to consolidate, proposed

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combining some grant programs and called for simplifying school district accounting requirements.

Similar proposals, meanwhile, were offered by Network 21, a coalition of 40 business, labor and education groups with the goal of improving the quality of the state's lowest-performing schools.

The board's report engendered a fair amount of controversy, much of it based on regional or ideological concerns. Some suburban lawmakers complained their constituents would be paying more taxes to help poor schools downstate, while some suburban school officials fretted about relying more on Springfield and less on local property owners to pay the bills. Some

conservatives disputed the need for any increased education spending, arguing schools have plenty of money already; they just need to operate more efficiently.

And politicians of all stripes shied away from any talk of the dreaded T-word, preferring instead to invoke the shopworn mantra of cutting waste and setting new priorities to free up money for schools.

The hubbub suits the panel's chair, former state schools superintendent Robert Leininger, just fine. "The report has done just what we wanted it to do," he says. "It's got a lot of people talking, a lot of people upset." The goal, he says, was to try to create a public debate during campaign season.

Rather than present something more politically palatable, he adds, the board decided to propose a comprehensive plan that was "fair, equitable, and will work, and let people decide whether or not they wanted to do something about it."

The board's recommendations were not revolutionary, of course; instead, its message echoed what other blue ribbon panels have said consistently for decades: Because the state relies too heavily on local property taxes to fund education, some school districts lack the resources to provide an adequate education for their students. The board noted that some districts can spend \$15,000 or more per pupil, while others need state help to reach the current

\$4,560 guarantee, even though local property owners may be paying at higher rates than their counterparts in districts with larger tax bases.

Moreover, the current per-pupil foundation level is some \$1,100 less than the \$5,665 minimum recommended by the board, a figure that reflects the average per-pupil spending for basic education costs in "high quality" Illinois schools, those in which at least two-thirds of students are performing at grade level on standardized tests.

Educating kids from low-income families is more costly because they are at greater risk of academic failure, the board said. Yet school districts with large numbers of low-income students generally have fewer local resources than districts with low concentrations of poor students.

The bottom line for the board, as for its predecessors: To guarantee educational opportunity for every child, the state should increase its share of the funding burden — now

***Because every child
has a right to a quality
education, the state
must ensure the resources
to provide it.***

38 percent — even if it means raising statewide taxes to do so.

The board's work poses a challenge for Illinois citizens. Its recommendations are based on a bedrock principle that voters are asked to share, the belief that no child should receive a standard education because of where he or she lives. Because every child has a right to a quality education, the state must ensure the resources to provide it.

If one accepts that premise, the idea of a tax increase should become more

tolerable. Anyone familiar with state finances should know there is no pot of money squirreled away to be tapped to boost school funding; indeed, current projections show the state ending this fiscal year \$725 million in the red.

Moreover, regional blinders should come off as well. Suburban residents might pay the lion's share of any new taxes, but, if so, it will be because they're wealthier than folks elsewhere in the state. That's how the income tax works. Suburbanites also should get more property tax relief, because overall home values, and thus school taxes, tend to be higher in suburbia than in Chicago or downstate communities.

But the issue demands a statewide perspective from citizens and their legislators alike. "You can't just be Sen. Foghorn from District X," says Leininger. "You took an oath to do what's right for the citizens of Illinois, not just your district." □

Charles N. Wheeler III is director of the Public Affairs Reporting Program at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

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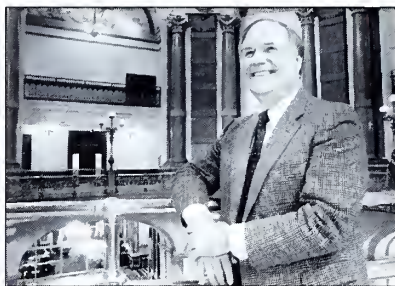
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